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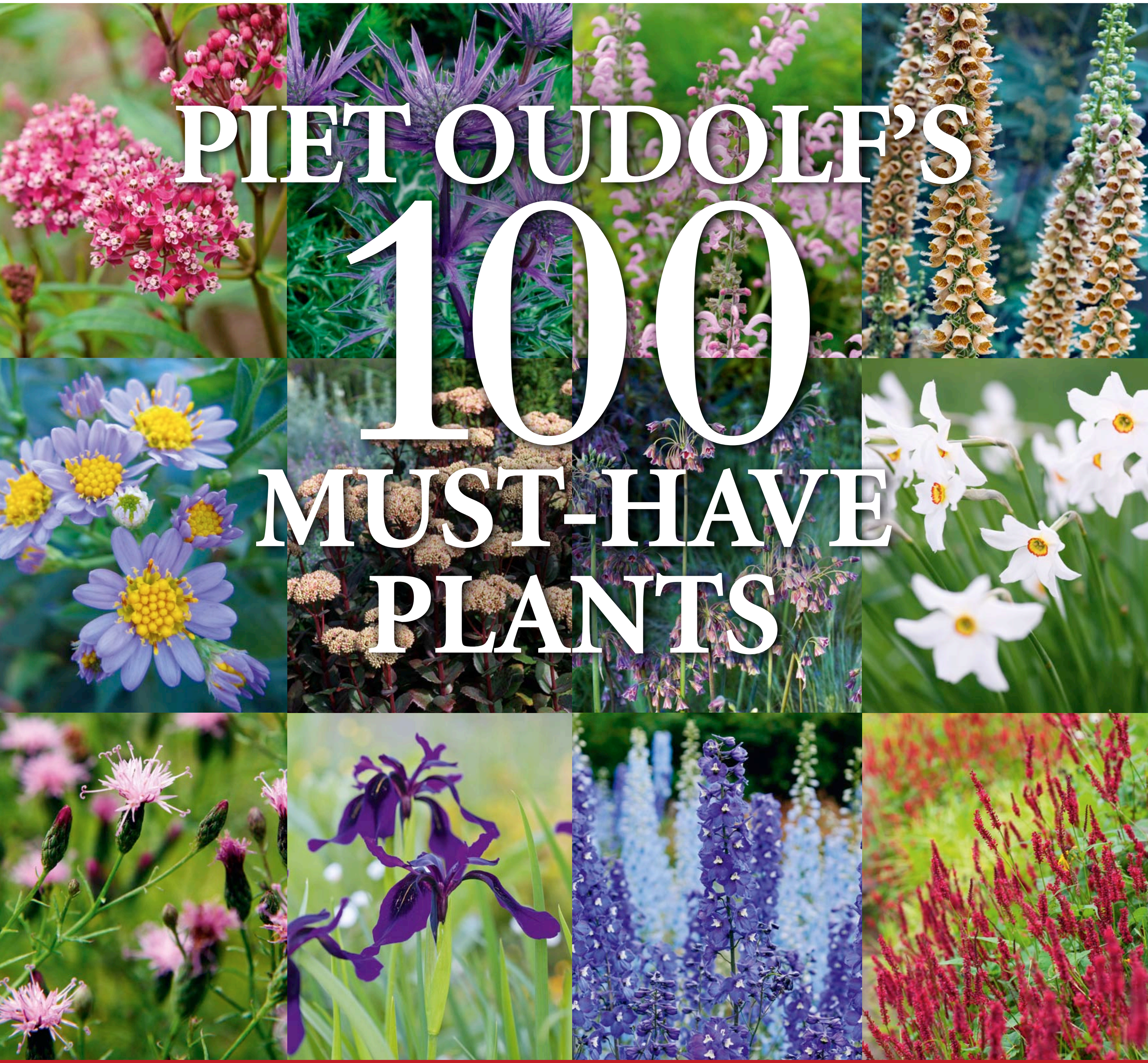
GARDENS ILLUSTRATED

FEBRUARY 2013



PIET OUDOLF'S 100 MUST-HAVE PLANTS

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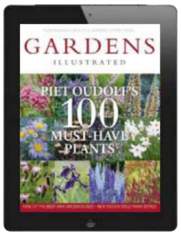
editor's letter

Making lists of plants to grow over the course of the coming year is a great way to while away the dark days of February. I am delighted that influential garden designer and nurseryman Piet Oudolf has taken time out of his extraordinarily busy schedule to give us his insights into 100 of his personal favourites. Regarded by many as a maverick, Piet's stylish, eco-aware and highly original take on planting has won him a loyal following as well as some of the most coveted design commissions in the world. With over 30 years experience working closely with plants, his selection is discerning, exciting and thought-provoking; an absolute treat for adventurous plant lovers. Piet has also kindly agreed to be one of our speakers at this year's GARDENS ILLUSTRATED lecture on Tuesday May 21, in London – full details on page 8. This issue we begin four new series: Fergus Garrett, highly regarded head gardener at Great Dixter, discusses a selection his favourite plants each month; we track down the brightest new gardening talent; find the most stylish design-related products (this month it's mini-greenhouses); and Annie Guilfoyle explores creative yet practical solutions to numerous aspects of garden design. Snowdrops are one of the key plants for February, so we ask expert grower Matt Bishop to explain which ones to grow to ensure the longest possible season. And to celebrate Valentine's day we profile the prettiest violets – who can resist their delicate charm? I hope you enjoy the issue,

Juliet



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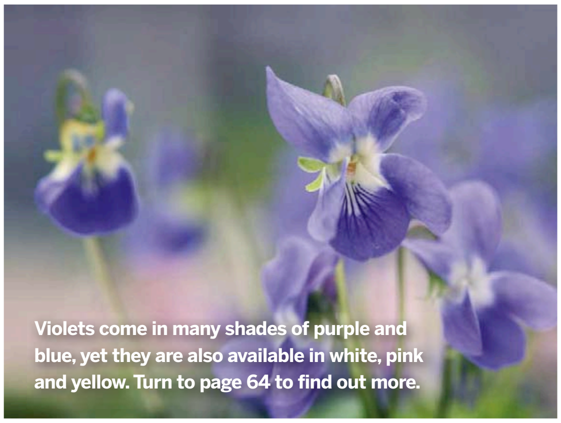

Violets come in many shades of purple and blue, yet they are also available in white, pink and yellow. Turn to page 64 to find out more.

Head gardener Fergus Garrett begins his new series Plantsman's Favourites on page 20.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

FERGUS GARRETT
Plantsman and head gardener at Great Dixter in East Sussex.

CAROL KLEIN
Plantswoman and presenter of BBC *Gardeners' World*.

ROY LANCASTER
Plantsman, planthunter, writer, lecturer and broadcaster.

ALYS FOWLER
Kew-trained gardener, author and television presenter.

DAN PEARSON
Garden designer, plantsman and columnist.

DIANNA JAZWINSKI / GAP PHOTOS, GRAHAM STRONG / GAP PHOTOS

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on the cover

PIET OUDOLF'S 100 MUST-HAVE PLANTS The influential garden designer and nurseryman shares his insights into the best garden plants – see page **33**

NINE OF THE BEST MINI GREENHOUSES Whatever your garden, we have an option for you on page **103**

NEW DESIGN SOLUTIONS SERIES Expert Annie Guilfoyle looks at garden design problems and offers creative solutions – see page **94**

plants

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33 **Piet Oudolf's 100 must-have plants** The year ahead offers an exciting opportunity to try something new. Renowned designer Piet Oudolf recommends his absolute favourite plants

64 **Plant profile: Violas** Roses are red, violets are blue – except when they are white, pink, purple, brown, yellow or multi-coloured. Ambra Edwards singles out the very best in violas

74 **Collecting snowdrops** *Galanthus* are the height of fashion – if you want to know how to start a collection, *Galanthus* expert Matt Bishop, former head gardener at The Garden House in Devon, is one of the best people to ask for advice

places

46 **Forever green** Striking topiary and a box of cunning tricks are the order of the day in this stylish London garden designed by Tommaso del Buono and Paul Gazerwitz

52 **February feast** Dial Park, the home of keen plant collectors Olive and David Mason, offers an early season cornucopia of varied interest

VIOLA: DIANNA JAZWINSKI / GAP PHOTOS

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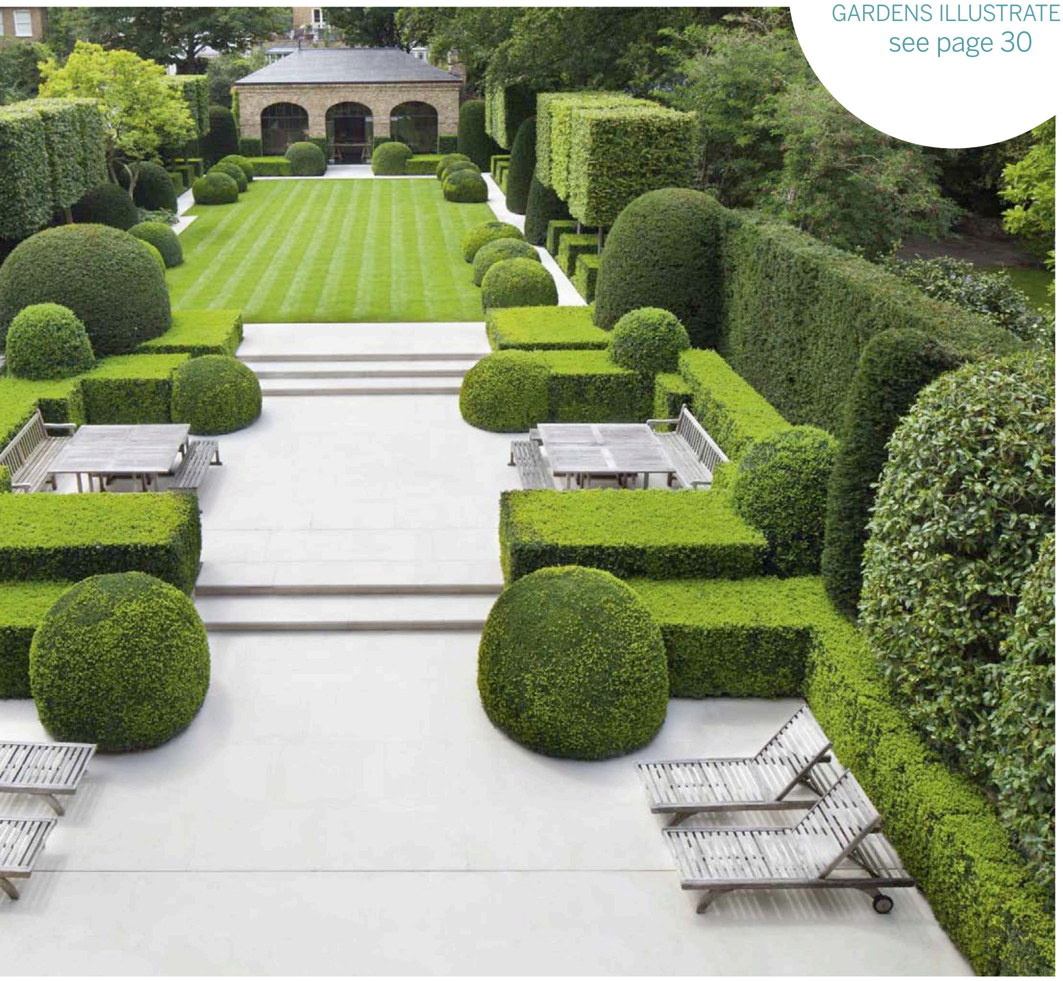
GARDENS ILLUSTRATED*
see page 30



DIGITALIS FERRUGINEA: MARG COUSENS / GAP PHOTOS

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- **Enjoy our Irish garden holiday – see page 18. Or travel to the Netherland's to see some of the country's finest gardens – see page 26**
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ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES

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MAGAZINE CONTACTS

EDITORIAL	
Editor	Juliet Roberts
Contributing editors	Alys Fowler, Fergus Garrett, Carol Klein, Roy Lancaster & Dan Pearson
Art editor	David Grenham
Deputy editor	Sorrel Everton
Deputy art editor	Niki Goss
Production editor	Mark Blackmore
Design freelance cover	Steve Sayers, Chris Jones
Botanical adviser	Dr James Compton
ADVERTISING	
Advertisement director	Caroline Herbert
Senior brand sales executive	Lucy Moakes **0117 933 8072** lucy.moakes@immediate.co.uk
Classified sales executive	Luke Newland **0117 314 8391** luke.newland@immediate.co.uk
USA advertising representative	Kate Buckley buckley@buckleypell.com
Advertising designer	Nathaniel Brain
INSERTS	
Laurence Robertson	**+353 876 902208**
CIRCULATION, MARKETING, PRESS & PR	
Newstrade manager	Rob Brock
Acting marketing manager	Julie Sewell
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Press officer	Carolyn Wray **0117 314 8300**
MANAGEMENT	
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SYNDICATION AND LICENSING	
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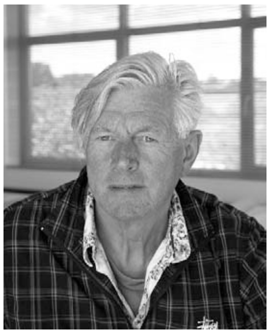


WALTER HERFST

PIET OUDOLF

From starting his practice in Haarlem in 1976, Piet has become one of the world's foremost garden designers and nurserymen. His gardens at Hummelo are known for their radical planting design. Piet's 100 must-have plants begins on page 33.

"Working with plants is not only a joy but an opportunity to understand processes and life cycles."

CAMILLA SWIFT

Originally inspired to garden aged four by planting houseleeks with her grandfather, Camilla, is now a freelance editor and writer. She lives and gardens in the Welsh Black Mountains, which she currently does wearing a wetsuit. See her feature on Dial Park on page 52.

"On a wet, grey February day there are few greater treats than to stand on a carpet of bright spring flowers."

ANDREW MONTGOMERY

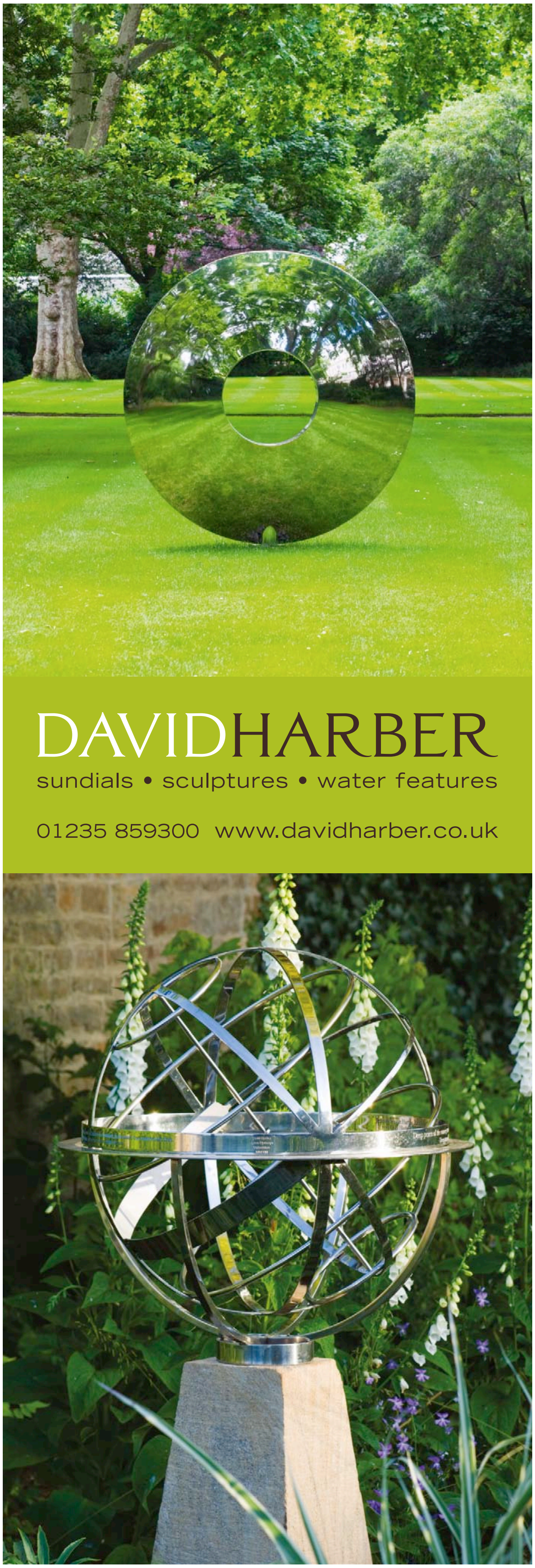
Andrew has spent the last ten years working on editorial commissions and has just finished working on a farmhouse cookbook. You can see his images of artist Natasha Clutterbuck on page 60.

"With the open fire and cosy atmosphere, Natasha's small cottage felt like something Tolkien might have dreamed."

SORREL EVERTON

As deputy editor of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED Sorrel loves learning how gardeners approach their challenges and the ideas they come up with to create garden idylls. On page 60 she talks to artist Natasha Clutterbuck about her own creative output.

"Natasha's pictures reminded me of the joy of harvesting home-grown crops. I'm itching to plant some seeds now."



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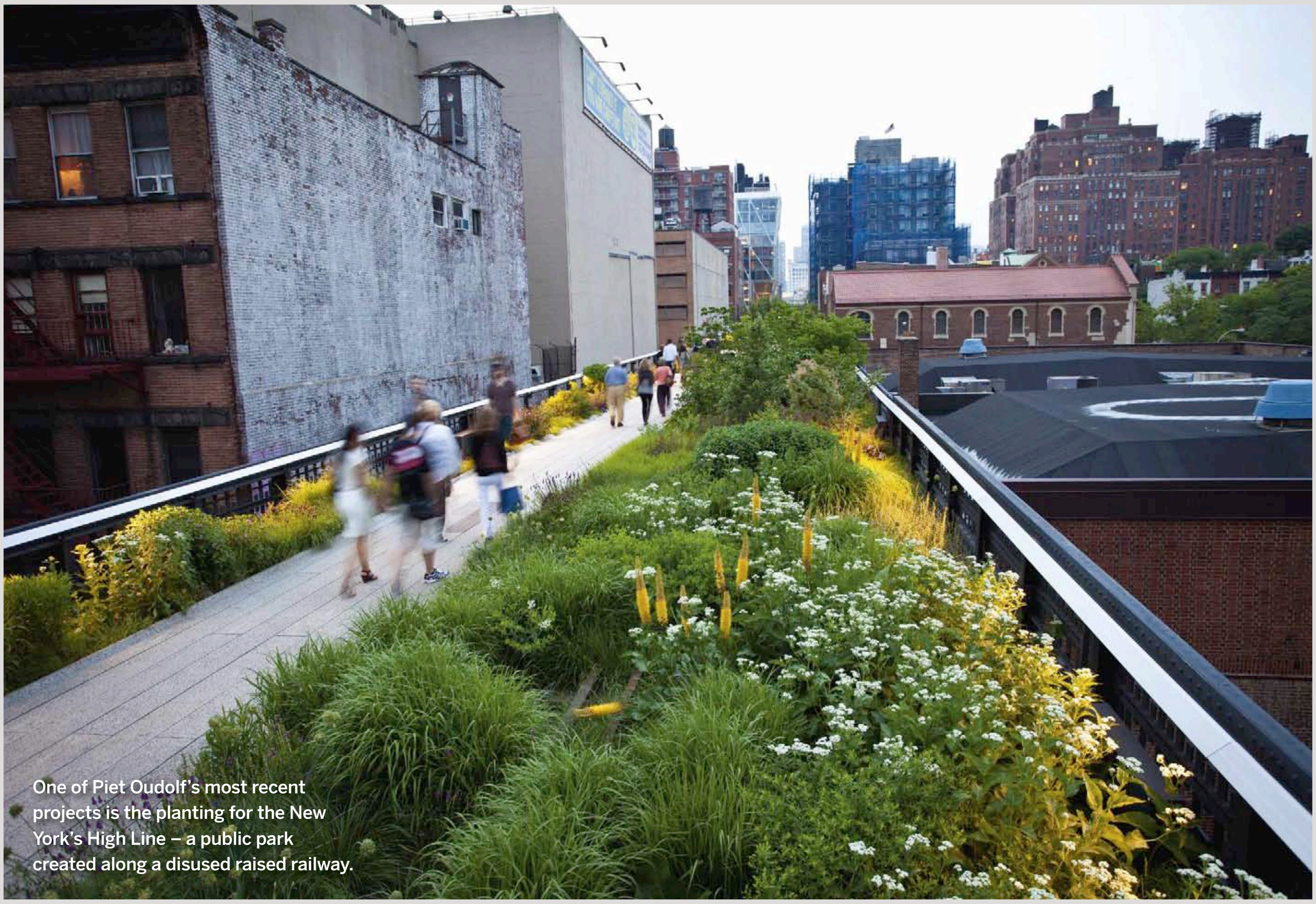
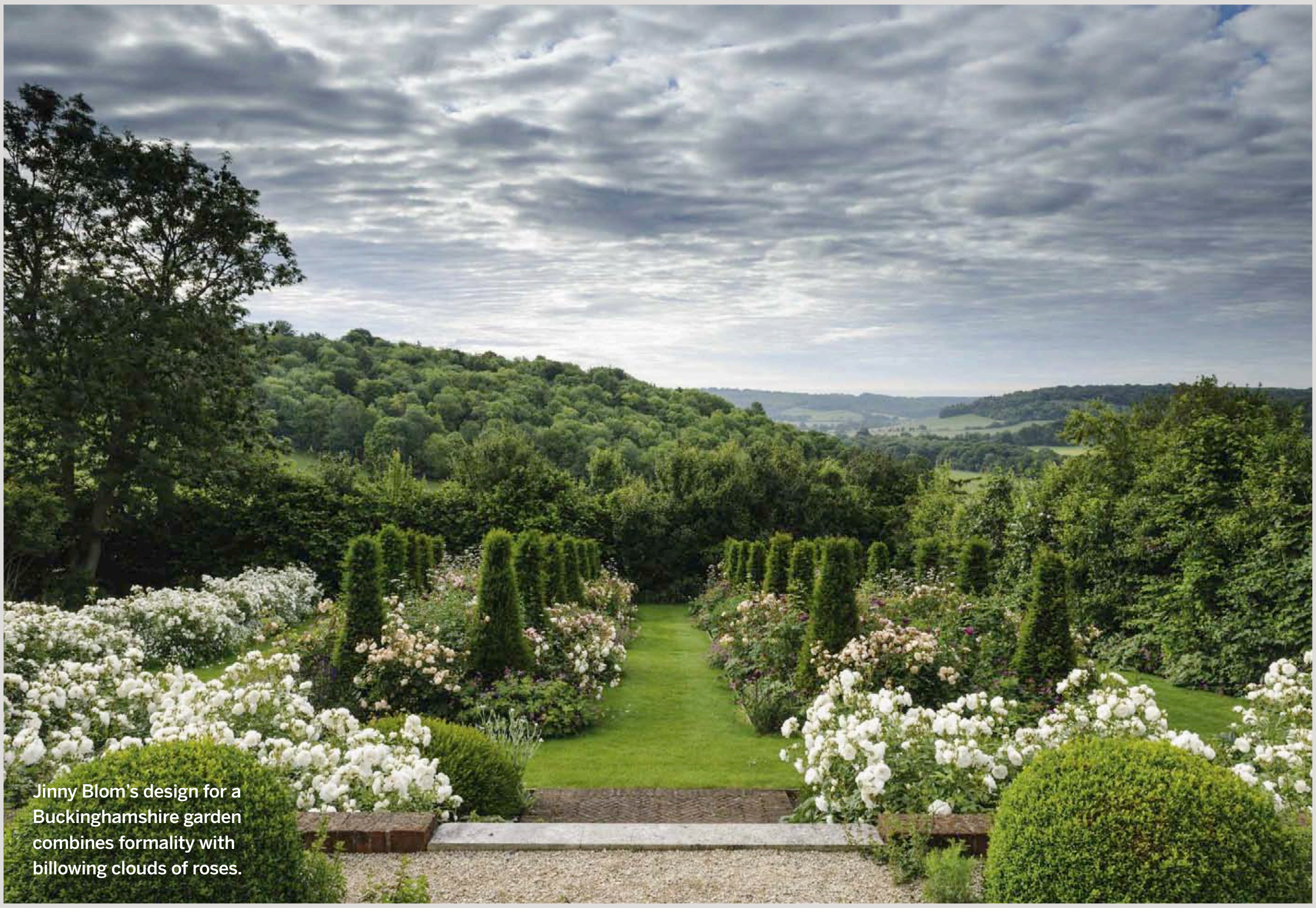


One of Piet Oudolf's most recent projects is the planting for the New York's High Line – a public park created along a disused raised railway.

CLAIRE TAKACS



Jinny Blom's design for a Buckinghamshire garden combines formality with billowing clouds of roses.

JASON INGRAM

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Gardens Illustrated Lecture

With Piet Oudolf and Jinny Blom

Join us for this year's inspirational talks at the Royal Geographical Society in London, Tuesday 21 May, 2013

We are delighted to once again be hosting the GARDENS ILLUSTRATED lecture at the Royal Geographical Society in London. This year our guest speakers include garden designer and nurseryman Piet Oudolf from the Netherlands, renowned internationally for his distinctive planting schemes most recently seen in The High Line park in New York. Joining him will be Jinny Blom, award-winning garden designer, whose sumptuous plantings blend the formal and informal to romantic effect.

Chaired by Tim Richardson, garden design critic and chairman of the Chelsea Fringe, the lecture promises to be informative and entertaining and a rare opportunity to see these two names comparing and contrasting their work.

This year, alongside standard tickets, we are offering 300 Premium tickets. Premium tickets include a glass of Laurent-Perrier champagne on arrival, plus access to priority seating. Book early to avoid disappointment. Subscribers receive a discount on the price of tickets.

GARDENS ILLUSTRATED reserves the right to replace the speakers with other speakers of equal stature in the unlikely event that either of them are unable to attend. Please let us know when booking of any special access requirements. Tickets are non-refundable. Driving to the lecture is not advised. Nearest London Underground station is South Kensington. Cash bar.

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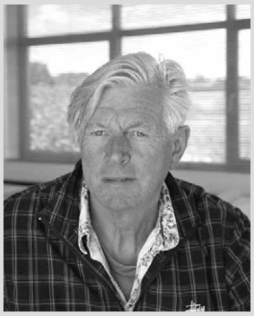

WALTER HERFST, CHARLIE HOPKINSON

Lecture Details

- **Date** Tuesday 21 May 2013
- **Venue** Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, South Kensington, London SW7 2AR

Order of Events

- **5.45pm** Doors open for 'Premium' tickets only. Laurent-Perrier champagne served
- **6.15pm** Doors open for standard tickets. (Cash bar available.)
- **7pm** Lecture begins
- **8.30pm** Q&A session concludes
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Dig in

News, Gardening talent, Plantsman's favourites, Gardener's notes & Shopping

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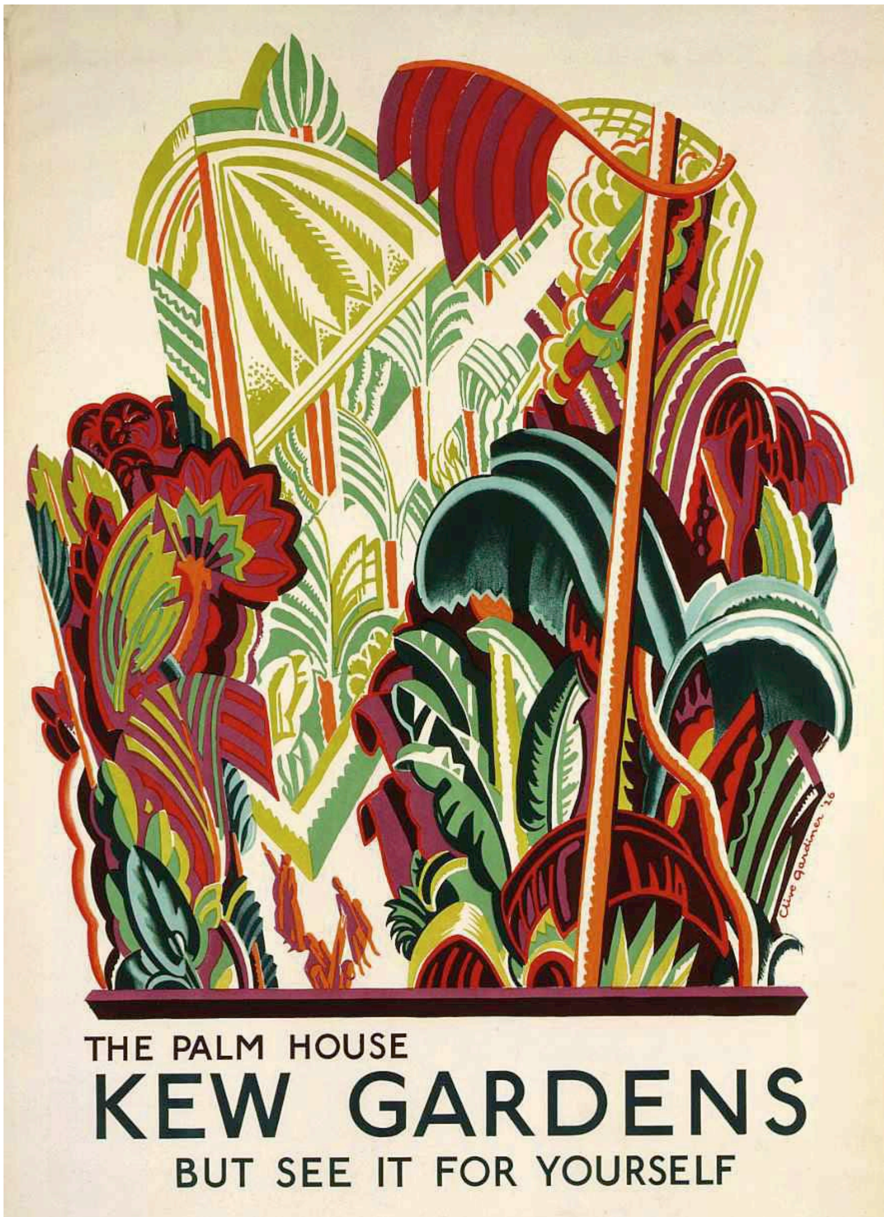
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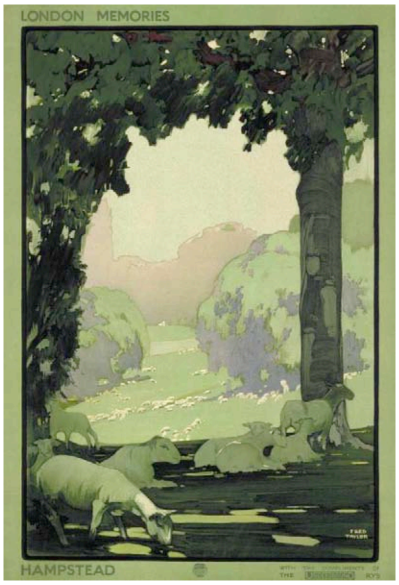
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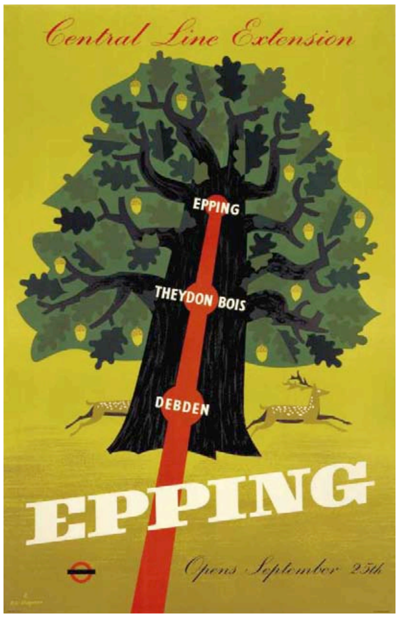
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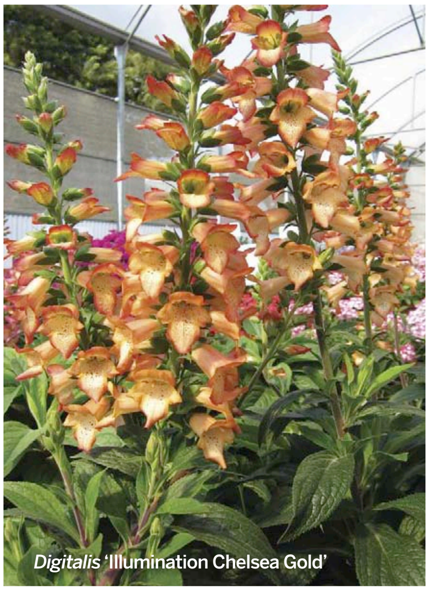
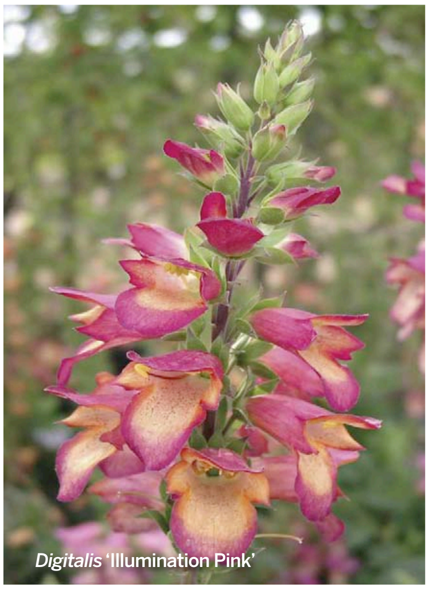
This year London Underground is celebrating its 150th anniversary. As the world's oldest underground railway, the tube has iconic status within the capital. Part of its character has been defined by the posters produced by London Underground throughout the past century and a half to promote the city's highlights, many by famous artists such as Paul Nash and Edward McKnight Kauffer. Of the 3,000 posters in the archive, 150 have been selected to appear in a celebratory exhibition *Poster Art 150* at the London Transport Museum. Gorgeous graphics and stylish typography encourage tube travellers to discover the capital, such as its parks, gardens and accessible countryside. A series of events accompanies the exhibition, including a joint event on 17 May with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, to mark their edible festival. *Poster Art 150* runs until October. www.ltmuseum.co.uk

Experience winter glories in John Massey's own garden as part of Ashwood Nurseries 'Winter in Bloom' series.

WINTER MAGIC *Ashwood Nurseries in the West Midlands celebrates winter with a series of inspiring events just when we need encouragement the most. The 'Winter in Bloom' series starts on 26 January with a hellebore lecture and tour, followed by a snowdrop lecture (3 February), open days at John Massey's garden (9 February and 16 March), RHS Guest Lecture with tree expert Chris Lane (12 February), John's lecture on 'The Magic of the Changing Seasons: Winter into Spring' (16 February). To end, John gives the RHS Spring Lecture on 19 March on hepaticas. Details on 01384 401996, www.ashwoodnurseries.com*



Digitalis 'Illumination Chelsea Gold'



Digitalis 'Illumination Pink'

NEW PLANTS

Illuminating choices

Look out for *Digitalis* 'Illumination Pink' this spring. This was last year's runaway winner selected as Plant of the Year at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. Unlike other foxgloves, this is reliably perennial (rather than the usual biennial foxglove habit) with outward-facing flowers on multiple stems in vibrant pink, which continue in bloom from May to November. Now, grower Thompson and Morgan have launched a new cultivar in the same series. 'Illumination Chelsea Gold' has rich yellow orange flowers and grows to 90cm in height. Both cultivars are available from Thompson and Morgan. Tel 0844 573 1818, www.thompson-morgan.com

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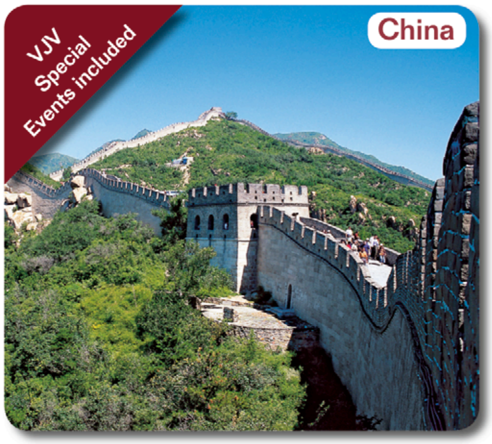

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Can you help?

If your New Year's resolutions included getting involved in volunteering, Perennial would like to hear from you. The charity organisation gives advice, support and financial assistance to those working in horticulture and needs help with fundraising, assisting at shows, or administrative backup. Those interested should contact volunteer support officer Laura Garnett. Tel 01372 384033, lgarnett@perennial.org.uk

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GARDEN VISITS

Scotland's Gardens 2013 *lists details of gardens open to the public north of the border in aid of charity. £5.50 from bookshops or via www.scotlandsgardens.org. The website has also been improved for easy searching.*

Diary

It's snowdrop time, so here's a selection of garden openings and special events.

- **Forde Abbey Snowdrop Weekends snowdrops and spring bulbs.** Open every weekend in February. Tel 01460 220231, www.forde abbey-gardens-dorset.co.uk
- **Harveys Garden Plants 'A Celebration of Snowdrops'.** Rare species on display and for sale. 2 February. Tel 01359 233363, www.harveysgardenplants.co.uk
- **Chelsea Physic Garden Snowdrop Days.** Various events including a snowdrop painting class. 2-10 February. Tel 020 7352 5646, www.chelsea physicgarden.co.uk
- **Marks Hall Snowdrop Walks.** Enjoy the displays 8-10, 15-17, 22-24 February. Tel 01376 563796, www.markshall.org.uk
- **Lexham Hall.** Extensive snowdrop displays. Open day 10 February. www.ngs.org.uk
- **Easton Walled Gardens Snowdrop Week.** Displays, talks and sales. 16-24 February. Tel 01476 530063, www.eastonwalledgardens.co.uk
- **Hever Castle Snowdrop Trail.** Plus early flowering quinces and camellias. 18-24 February. Tel 01732 865224, www.hevercastle.co.uk
- **Kelmarsh Hall.** Wander the gardens. 23-24 February. Tel 01604 686543, www.kelmarsh.com
- **East Bergholt Snowdrop Walk.** Owner Rupert Eley gives a guided walk. 21 February. Tel 01206 299224, www.placeforplants.co.uk
- **Scottish Snowdrop Festival.** Over 50 gardens throughout Scotland take part in the annual snowdrop festival from castles to walled gardens. 2 February-17 March. www.visitscotland.com/surprisesnowdrop

• All events and display timings listed should be checked before travelling.

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Rachael Dodd

We've tracked down some of the brightest new gardening talent to find out who the next head gardeners might be. First in the series is Rachael – brought up in Wales with Scottish heritage, she is currently part of the team at Great Dixter

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Earliest gardening memory Pulling up sycamore seedlings, five years old. My grandfather offered to pay one penny per seedling. My sister and I spent days crawling under hedges and sifting through the lawn to earn over five pounds each. We astonished Grandpa, who had expected to pay us in coppers.

First plant love Dandelions. What else do you love aged three? The delight of sailing seedheads. I am still fascinated by movement in gardens and the unravelling of seasons – perhaps this is why.

Favourite garden I adore Kerdalo in Brittany. It is a hidden garden that rolls down to a tidal river, and strikes a delicate balance between wildness and control, structure and an abundance of good plants.

Three worthwhile tips for every gardener 'Be observant. Make a note. Act on it.' The wise teachings of my head gardener, Fergus Garrett.

Favourite planting style I'm won over by the method at Dixter that Christopher Lloyd practised for years; on-site experimentation with observation and adjustment: the try-it-and-see approach.

Least favourite plant group This makes me laugh. My tastes have changed incredibly since I started and will probably continue to do so. I seem to remember a distaste for bedding years ago and now I think it's a terribly dynamic aspect of gardening and I'm learning to weave it in and out of the borders at Dixter. It comes down to having a good experience of something, I want to give everything a chance.

What is the hardest gardening task? I've scaled 30ft ladders to cut hedges and climbed in to giant clumps of *Puya* (they have THREE types of spines) to saw off old flower spikes with no problem, but I still hate killing slugs and throwing away any plants.

What principles have guided your attitude to gardening? That the gardens I love most are expressions of people's personality and character; that gardens should always communicate with their greater surroundings; that to know a plant you really have to grow it, ideally from seed, shoot or division to planting, maturity, manipulation; that acute observation is the best tool you have – and that there is no right way of doing it, try new things and new ways, be open.

Favourite gardening blogs *Anemone times*, by Helen O'Donell, a superb practical gardener in Vermont, and *Got soil?* by Deb Wiles, garden historian. • **contact rachydodd@gmail.com**

Experience sumptuous planting at
Jimi Blake's garden, Hunting Brook.

EXCLUSIVE READER HOLIDAY

IRISH GARDEN TOUR

Exclusive GARDENS ILLUSTRATED tour of the gardens of Dublin and the Wicklow Mountains in the company of Jimi Blake of Hunting Brook, **23-26 September, 2013**

Here's everything you would want from an Irish gardens tour; a rich selection of gardens with good food, engaging company and – that essential ingredient – wonderful good humour.

We begin and end this journey visiting some choice Dublin gardens, including **The Dillon Garden** and seductive **Mount Venus Nursery**. The body of the tour is spent visiting many superb gardens of exceptional quality in counties Wicklow and Wexford, including **Mount Congreve**, probably the most majestic woodland garden in Europe, as well as Jimi Blake's own garden of **Hunting Brook** and his sister June's creation at **Tinode**.

This breathtaking area is blessed with a gentle coastline, mountains, lakes and a treasury of unique and fascinating gardens. Even the hotel has a wonderful garden: Marlfield House is a sumptuous, family-run hotel (once residence of the Earls of Courtown) with beautiful rooms and fine food, as well as its own kitchen garden, herbaceous borders and woodland gardens; a luxury country house par excellence.

The Dillon Garden in Dublin offers a masterclass in planting.

TOUR LEADER JIMI BLAKE

From assisting his mother with garden projects, Jimi Blake went on to work in garden centres, train at Dublin Botanic Gardens and become head gardener at Airfield House. Since 2002 he has been developing his own garden at Hunting Brook. Jimi gives lectures and courses at Hunting Brook as well as throughout Ireland, the UK and the US.

The tranquil Bay Garden in County Wexford.

JIMI BLAKE, JANE SEBIRE / THE GARDEN COLLECTION

BOOKING DETAILS

The price per person sharing is £1,998 (single supplement of £150 levied by the hotel).

The price includes dinner (with wine), bed and buffet breakfast accommodation for three nights at the Marlfield House with four light lunches and return flights from London, Heathrow. Those wishing to make their own flight arrangements should state this on the booking form and deduct £122 per person from the price.

For more information or to book please contact:
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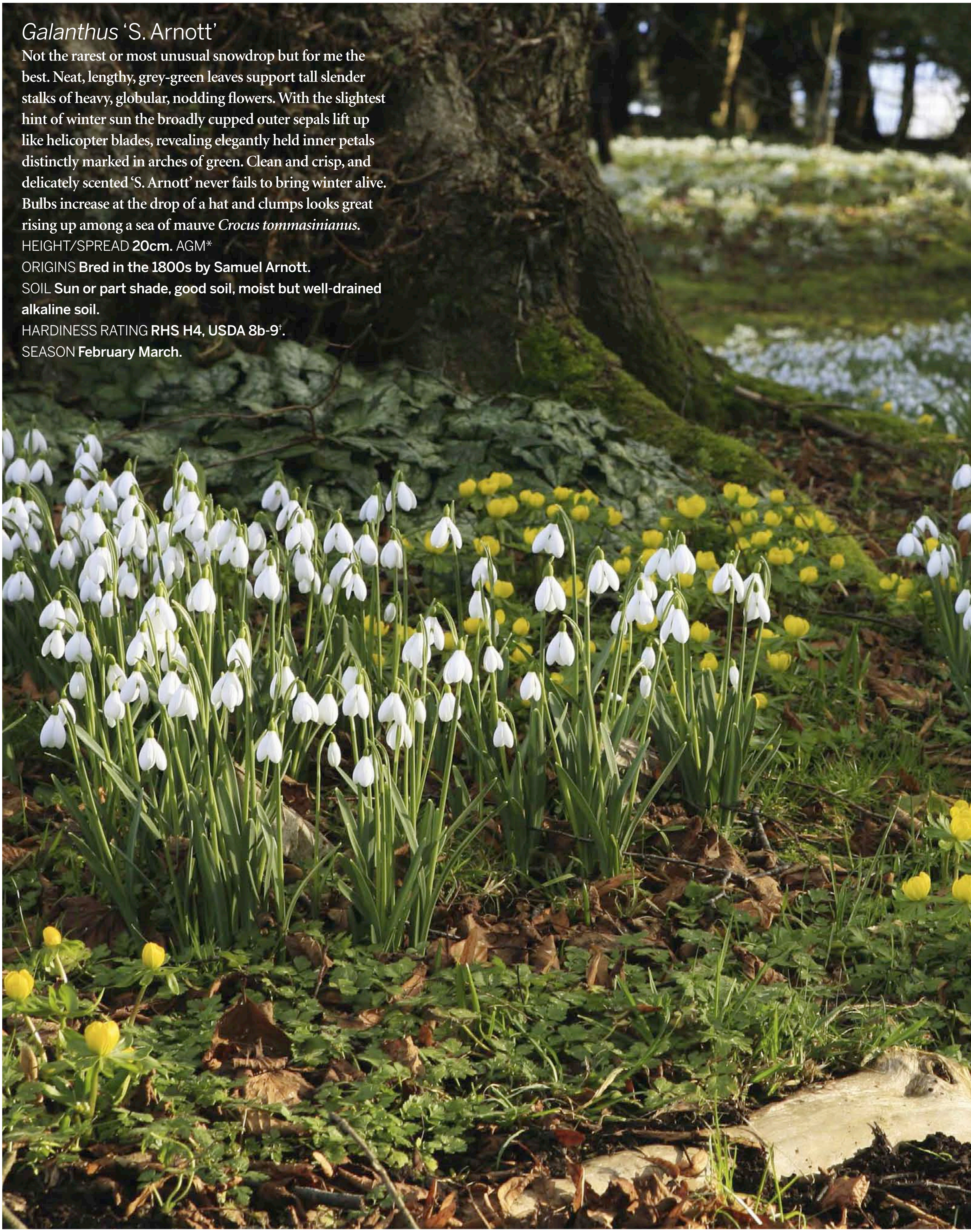
9830 ATOL PROTECTED

The kitchen garden at Marlfield House hotel.

This tour has been arranged exclusively for readers of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED by Boxwood Tours, Quality Garden Holidays, a specialist garden tour company set up in 1990, directed by Sue and Brian Macdonald, Kew-trained, professional gardeners.



Galanthus 'S. Arnott'

Not the rarest or most unusual snowdrop but for me the best. Neat, lengthy, grey-green leaves support tall slender stalks of heavy, globular, nodding flowers. With the slightest hint of winter sun the broadly cupped outer sepals lift up like helicopter blades, revealing elegantly held inner petals distinctly marked in arches of green. Clean and crisp, and delicately scented 'S. Arnott' never fails to bring winter alive. Bulbs increase at the drop of a hat and clumps looks great rising up among a sea of mauve *Crocus tommasinianus*.

HEIGHT/SPREAD **20cm.** AGM*

ORIGINS **Bred in the 1800s by Samuel Arnott.**

SOIL **Sun or part shade, good soil, moist but well-drained alkaline soil.**

HARDINESS RATING **RHS H4, USDA 8b-9†.**

SEASON **February March.**

February plants

Despite the cold there are still some lively choices to be made as our new series from Great Dixter's head gardener Fergus Garrett demonstrates

WORDS **FERGUS GARRETT** PHOTOGRAPHS **SHARON PEARSON**

GRAHAM STRONG / GAP PHOTOS

Fergus Garrett is a plantsman and head gardener at Great Dixter in East Sussex. He also lectures, writes and serves on Royal Horticultural Society committees

Ilex x koehneana

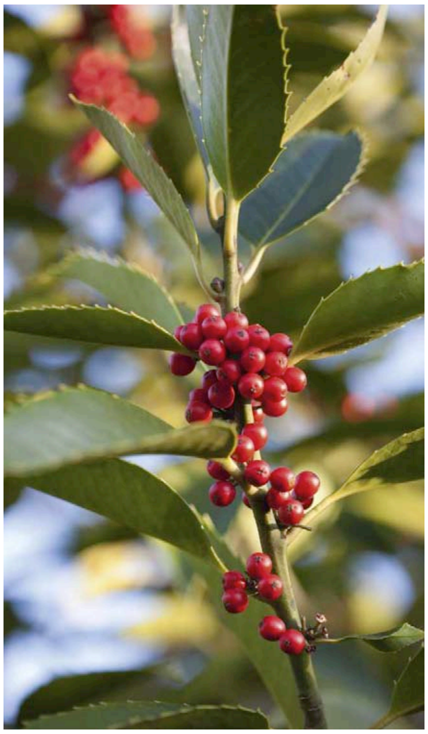
The chestnut-leaved holly is an airy yet robust conical evergreen tree with wide-spreading branches and leaves that are among the largest and broadest of any holly. As with most hollies *Ilex* x *koehneana* is dioecious, carrying male and female flowers on separate trees. The white flowers are small, opening May to June with females later developing dramatic bunches of tightly packed orange-red berries. By October trees can be laden with thick clusters of fruit.

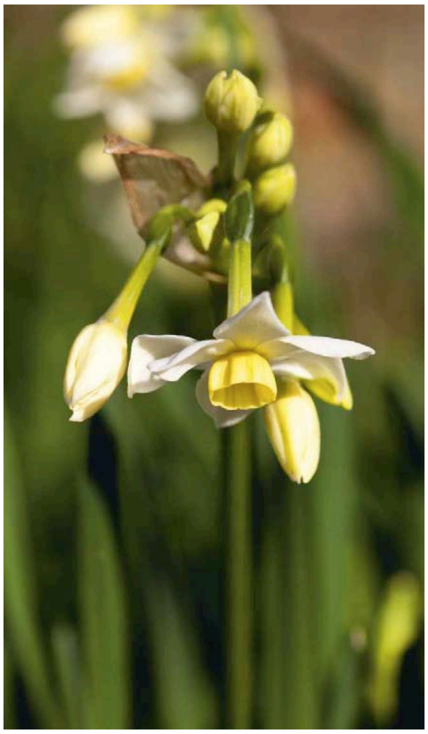
HEIGHT/SPREAD 5m x 4m.

ORIGINS A hybrid of the far eastern *Ilex latifolia* and the European *Ilex aquifolium*.

CONDITIONS Sun to part shade in well-drained but moist soil.

SEASON All year round for foliage. October to March for berries.





Narcissus tazetta

A highly variable species daffodil found from southern Europe to China. Handsome, long, dark green leaves are early to emerge in December followed later by powerfully scented flowers in February. Each stem carries an umbel of up to 15 small flowers with broad creamy white petals and a short pale yellow corona. Cultivars such as 'Paperwhite', 'Grand Soleil' and 'Ziva' are more popular in cultivation but in my eyes the species has an unrivalled elegance. Planted with *Eucomis*, one bulb takes after another for a seamless succession.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 50cm.

ORIGINS Southern Europe through to China.

SOIL Best in good, rich soil. Prefers a warm sunny corner.

SEASON End of January to early March.

*Holds an RHS Award of Garden Merit

†Hardiness ratings given where available

Hebe cupressoides 'Boughton Dome'

A small, compact bun-like evergreen shrub resembling a well-furnished conifer with fine, tightly packed, samphire-like needles. The young growth is a lively rich pallid green and ripples across a fine and intricate undulating surface. Once described by Christopher Lloyd as 'a comfortable dumpling that sits like an old lady on the bus'. Useful as an all-year-round full stop in borders but its slow growing nature means it needs breathing space to develop freely. Occasionally reverts back to the freer growing *Hebe cuppressoides*.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 1m x 1m.

ORIGINS A sport of *Hebe cuppressoides*.

CONDITIONS Best in well-drained moist soil in full sun.

SEASON All year round as foliage.

Hamamelis x *intermedia* 'Aphrodite'

An impressive vase-shaped shrub with spreading branches dappled with large clusters of spidery amber-coloured flowers that is a heartwarming sight even on the dullest of days. Although the overall coloration is burnt amber, 'Aphrodite' stands vibrant and is best placed where it can glow in the winter sun. The foliage on my youngster is nothing to write home about, though some profess glorious autumn colour in rich shades of red.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 3m x 3m. AGM*

ORIGINS A hybrid between *Hamamelis* x *intermedia* 'Vesna' and *Hamamelis* x *intermedia* 'Pallida'.

CULTIVATION Best in slightly acid to neutral soil in full sun or dappled shade. Avoid frost pockets and waterlogged soil.

SEASON Flowering January-March.

ANDREA JONES / GARDEN WORLD IMAGES

Crocus tommasinianus

In cold weather this shuts up to obscurity and its outer surfaces are washed with grey ('ashen grey' as EA Bowles described it). A rise in temperature brings the plant alive as petals unfurl to reveal a delightful rich mauve innards suffusing to a pale centre pierced by bright orange sexual organs, which prove irresistibly enticing to bees. Roams about by seeding and is especially good in grass. Also useful in borders nestling with snowdrops and carpeting the free space underneath deciduous trees and shrubs.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 10cm. AGM*

ORIGINS Named after the botanist Muzio de Tommasini. Native to Bulgaria, Hungary, and the former Yugoslavia.

CULTIVATION Any well-drained soil in sun or semi-shade.

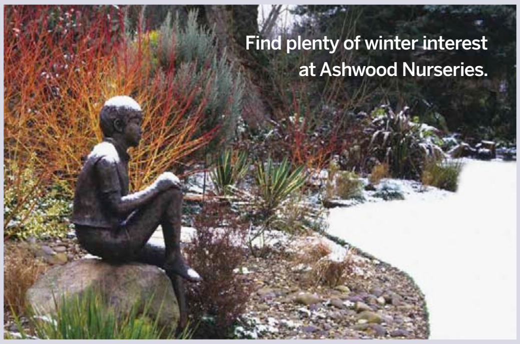
SEASON End of January to February.

Places to visit

Fergus Garrett shares some of his favourite places to see plants at their best.

Set in the beautiful Churn Valley in the heart of the Gloucestershire Cotswolds, **Colesbourne Park** is regarded as one of the world's greatest snowdrop gardens. The home of the Elwes family since 1789, expect drifts of cyclamen, hellebores and an extraordinary range of snowdrops. Open Saturdays and Sundays in February 2013. Colesbourne Gardens LLP, Colesbourne, Nr Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL53 9NP. Tel 01242 870264. www.colesbournegardens.org.uk

NICOLA STOCKEN TOMKINS / THE GARDEN COLLECTION



Find plenty of winter interest at Ashwood Nurseries.

Nurseryman, plant breeder, plant collector and gardener extraordinaire **John Massey** has magic at his fingertips. His private garden to the side of Ashwood Nurseries has outstanding

Helleborus 'Anna's Red'

These plants possess the desirable quality of staring you right in the eye rather than shrinking away in the undergrowth. Dark stems rise up from lightly marbled leaves carrying gently overlapping, wide-brimmed sepals saturated in rich carmine red. These surround a centre of rolled lime green nectaries punctuated by chalky green stamens. Makes your mouth water and if they are half as special as Anna Pavord herself then you're on to a winner. Planted at Great Dixter among the silver leaves of *Pulmonarias*, I hope it has the background it needs.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 35cm x 30cm.

ORIGINS Bred by Rodney Davey of RD Plants, Devon, and named after Anna Pavord.

CONDITIONS Rich soil in semi shade.

SEASON February to March.

Clematis cirrhosa var. *balearica*

This enchanting evergreen climber characteristically scrambles into its neighbours, forming an amorphous body decorated throughout with small, glossy green, ferny leaves. These turn bronze with the onset of cold weather. The flowers are scented and delicate and hang like pale yellow-green bells with recurved petal tips revealing the seductive maroon, lightly freckled centre. Plants flower from early December through to March and cut stems can last well in the vase if bases are dipped in boiling water.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 5m x 5m.

ORIGINS Introduced in 1783 from the Balearic Islands. Found mainly on Minorca.

CONDITIONS Sun to part shade in good soil.

HARDINESS RATING RHS H3, USDA 9b-10a.

SEASON December to end of February.

Euonymus fortunei 'Silver Queen'

An underrated common variegated evergreen shrub that has historically endured much abuse. Grows typically broader than high, forming a layered and tentacled habit. The slightly serrated, elliptical leaves have creamy white (butter yellow in spring) margins and are marbled green and grey green in the centre. Young stems are also pale creamy green and splay outwards, reaching for space. Any pruning must be sensitive to its shape. Will climb if given suitable support.

HEIGHT/SPREAD 1.5m x 2.5m.

ORIGINS Thought to be a sport of *Euonymus fortunei* 'Carrierei'.

CONDITIONS Sun/part shade in any garden soil that isn't waterlogged.

HARDINESS RATING RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a.

SEASON All year round.

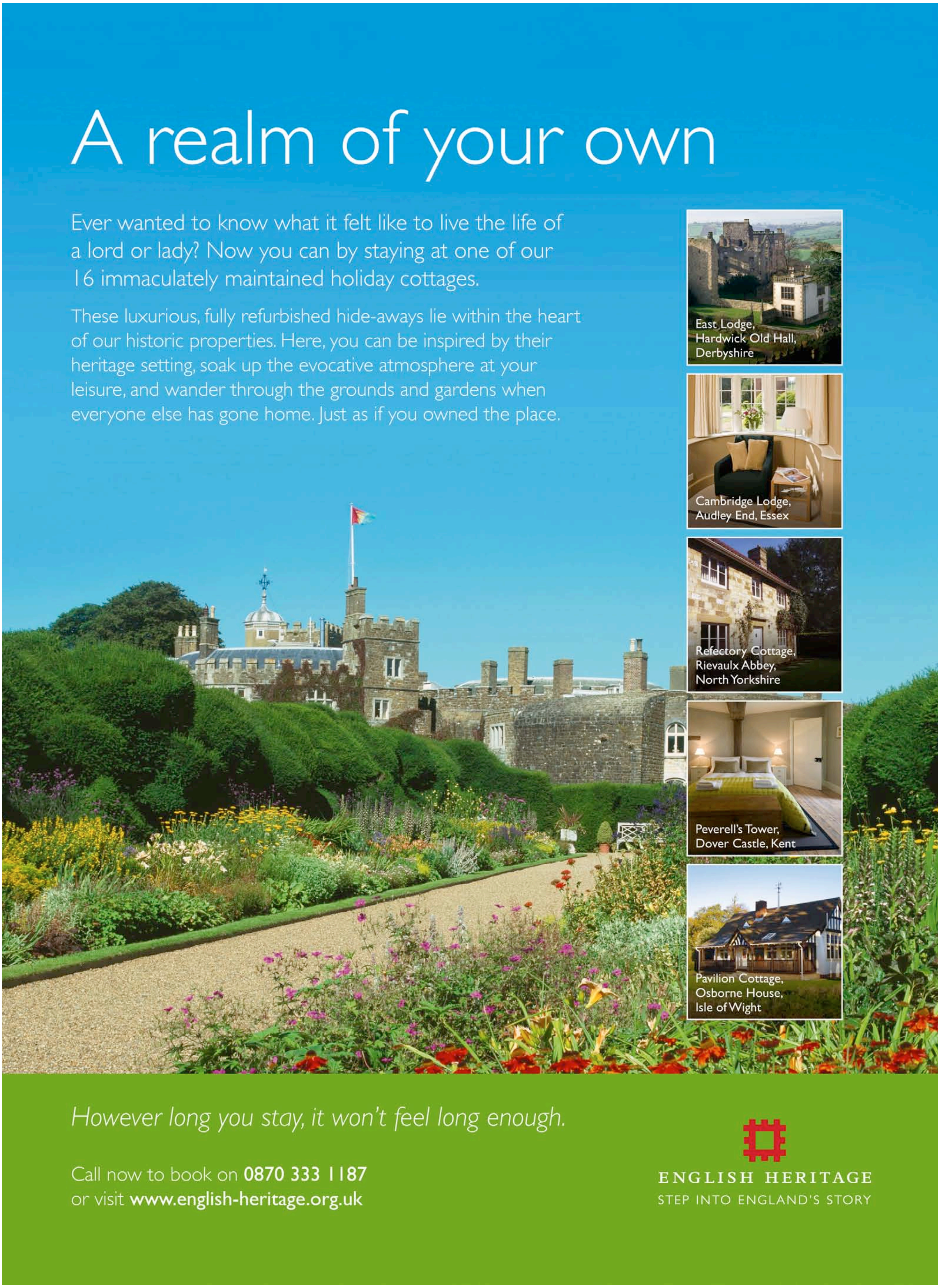
JONATHAN BUCKLEY / GAP PHOTOS

winter interest packed with hellebores, cyclamen, snowdrops, witch hazels, hepaticas, birches and dogwoods. This is a plantsman's garden with an abundance of rare plants. The garden is open Saturday 9 February from 10am-4pm, as well as 16 March, 20 April, 1 June, 20 July and 28 September. Ashwood Nurseries, Ashwood Lower Lane, Ashwood, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 OAE. Tel 01384 401996. www.ashwoodnurseries.com

Chris Lane is one of our great plantsmen and his nursery near Newington, Kent, is an inspirational site for anyone interested in plants. He is only open on designated days so check the website for his February open days and visit his National Collection of witch hazels. These are mass planted in straight rows – a sight that will stop you in your tracks. Later visits can be made to see flowering cherries, wisteria, lilacs, and birches. The Witch Hazel Nursery, The Granary, Callaways Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 7LU. Tel 01795 843098. www.witchhazelnursery.com

A stunning display of witch hazels at Chris Lane's nursery.

MARCU SHARPUR / THE GARDEN COLLECTION



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Looking up

Watch the skies carefully – little by little they are getting brighter. Time to make preparations for better days, plus a reminder to keep bird feeders topped up

WORDS LIA LEENDERTZ ILLUSTRATION PETRA BÖRNER

Sow perennial cut flowers

This is one of the toughest months, yet there are signs that spring will – one day – come. Light is increasing by increments and I find the urge to sow almost overwhelming. I could waste (and have wasted) all manner of time, seed and compost by diving impulsively into the seed box at these moments, but pick the right seeds and eagerness becomes an asset. Perennials you are treating as annuals for cut flowers need a long season, so sow *Antirrhinum*, *Verbena bonariensis* and *Salvia patens* now, in a heated propagator.

Cut back stems

Of course I've been a good, wildlife-loving gardener, and have left my perennials standing – some handsome and sculptural, most droopy and comical – and even now beneficial insects snooze contentedly among their drunkenly leaning stems. It's not time to evict them yet, but spotting early signs of growth at the crown of the plants makes me twitchy; I've looked at this increasingly downtrodden scene all winter, and am longing for a clean sweep. So go in with the secateurs but don't go cramming the clippings into the compost heap or – the horror! – burning them. Pile them up in an inconsequential corner, so that the helpful insects can stir and emerge at their own leisure.

Feed the birds

It has become household myth that the old lady who lived here before us fed the birds every day for 55 years. We never met her, but the feeders strung through the lilac bushes and the fearless extended family of sparrows that chatter through the garden and nest every spring in the roof space above my bed give her soft spot away. And so we feed them too. How sad if they went away on our watch? This is perhaps the month they need it most, when the rich pickings of autumn are depleted and spring bounties are a way off. We put out mixed seed and the occasional fat ball (fatty foods help them through the cold nights), and think of Mrs Glanville.

Things to do

Prune wisteria by shortening whippy growth and cutting side growths back to a few centimetres.

Dig over and weed areas for hardy annuals, and cover them with black plastic to warm the soil.

Prune summer flowering clematis now, down to 30cm or so above the soil, but don't touch early flowering types.

Scour the garden for snails and slugs – they will emerge at the same time as new growth so steal a march.

Lift, split and instantly replant clumps of snowdrops as they fade.

EXCLUSIVE
READER
HOLIDAY

GARDENS OF THE NORTHERN DUTCH PROVINCES

Take in some of the best gardens and nurseries at the cutting edge of horticultural development, including a tour of Piet and Anja Oudolf's private garden, 3-9 July, 2013

Piet Oudolf's garden in Hummelo is a masterclass in perennial plant combinations.

Relatively unknown to outsiders, the landscapes of the northern Dutch provinces of Friesland, Groningen and Drenthe are expansive, peaceful and home to many good gardens, as well as traditional villages and historic towns. Many seeking to create gardens within quiet and spacious surroundings have come here over the last 30 years, resulting in today's rich heritage of gardens and nurseries. Here, gardens retain the traditional formal hedging of Dutch garden style, but sometimes with a modern twist – often accompanied by rich and varied perennial planting.

Our tour takes you to a range of mostly contemporary gardens, with an emphasis on adventurous planting. We will meet with garden designers who will show us examples of their work, plus take a tour accompanied by an expert versed in the traditional landscapes of the area. We will also visit nurseries that have good display gardens and plant collections.

Starting and ending at Amsterdam's Schipol airport, on our first afternoon we will travel north to visit the private garden of Piet and Anja Oudolf in Hummelo. The tour will then be based in the historic city of Groningen, most famous recently for its dramatically designed art museum.

• If you can start your trip a little earlier you might like to attend a special GARDENS ILLUSTRATED 'Planting Design Workshop' with Piet Oudolf and Noël Kingsbury on 3 July. This is a unique opportunity to spend time in Piet's garden and hear him discuss his plant selection and how he manages perennial combinations (with additional research from Noël on plant longevity). Piet will also discuss planting design techniques for his public work.

TOUR DETAILS

TOUR LEADER

Noël Kingsbury is a plantsman, gardener, designer and author of many garden books. He is best known for his naturalistic approach to planting, which he promotes in both his private and public schemes.

WHERE TO BOOK

The tour price is £1,730 per person (not including return flights from London).

For more information about the trip, accommodation arrangements, day-to-day activities and how to book, contact Distant Horizons – details below.

The Planting Design Workshop costs £120 and can be booked as an additional part of the trip or as an individual event. Full details available on request.

CONTACT DETAILS

Address Distant Horizons, 13 Melloncroft Drive,
Caldy, The Wirral CH48 2JA, UK.
Tel +44 (0)151 625 3425
Email info@distanthorizons.co.uk
Website www.distanthorizons.co.uk

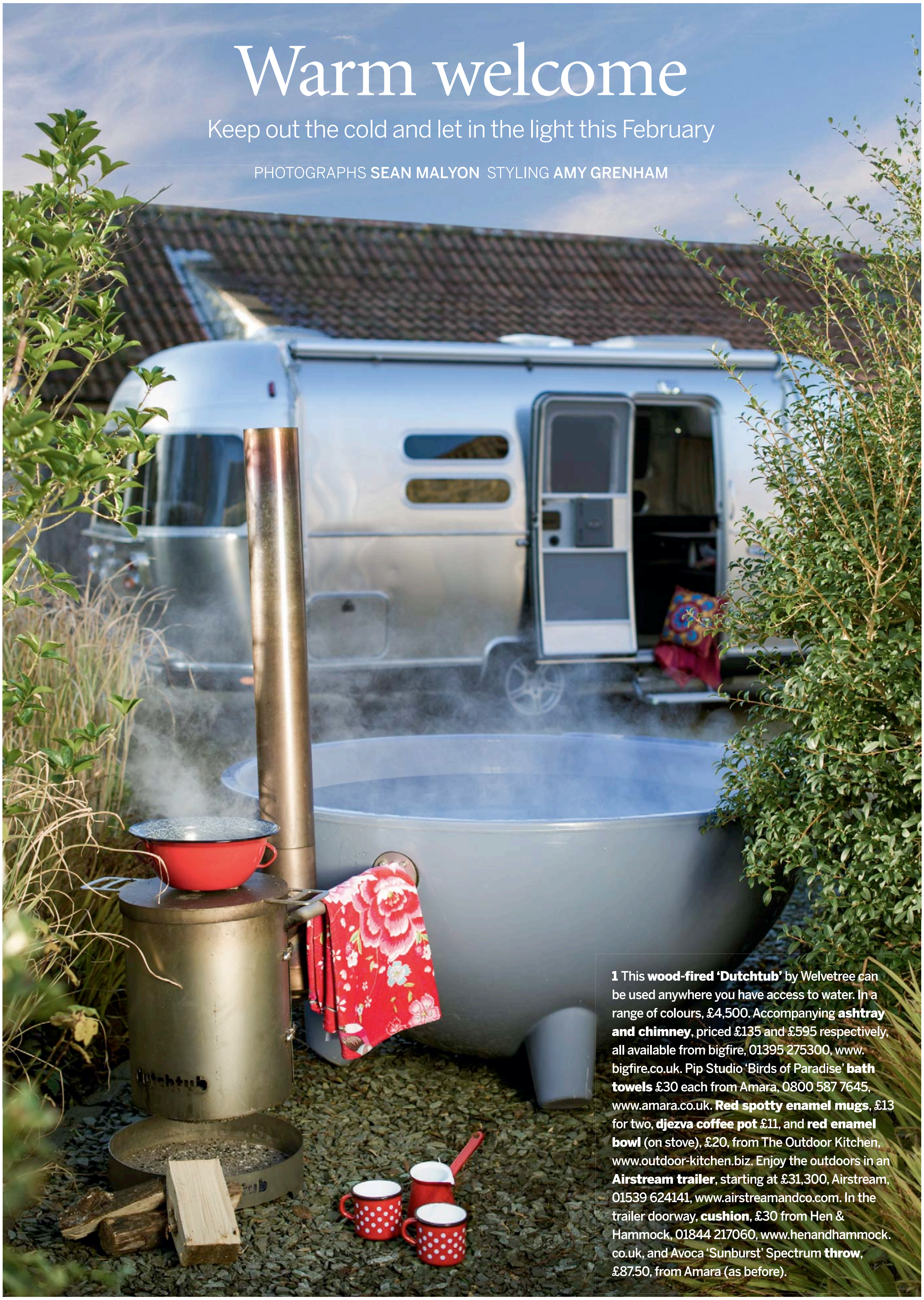
This tour is organised exclusively for readers of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED by Distant Horizons.

WALTER HERFST

Warm welcome

Keep out the cold and let in the light this February

PHOTOGRAPHS **SEAN MALYON** STYLING **AMY GRENHAM**



1 This **wood-fired 'Dutchtub'** by Welvetree can be used anywhere you have access to water. In a range of colours, £4,500. Accompanying **ashtray and chimney**, priced £135 and £595 respectively, all available from bigfire, 01395 275300, www.bigfire.co.uk. Pip Studio 'Birds of Paradise' **bath towels** £30 each from Amara, 0800 587 7645, www.amara.co.uk. **Red spotty enamel mugs**, £13 for two, **djezva coffee pot** £11, and **red enamel bowl** (on stove), £20, from The Outdoor Kitchen, www.outdoor-kitchen.biz. Enjoy the outdoors in an **Airstream trailer**, starting at £31,300, Airstream, 01539 624141, www.airstreamandco.com. In the trailer doorway, **cushion**, £30 from Hen & Hammock, 01844 217060, www.henandhammock.co.uk, and Avoca 'Sunburst' Spectrum **throw**, £87.50, from Amara (as before).

2

3

6 These Weltevree **field chairs** are made from robust tanalised wood, and can be used indoors or out, £295 a pair, available from bigfire as before. Pictured on chairs, 'Virginia' Merino **lambswool throw**, £410 (large) and **'Papaya' cushion** £95 from Wallace Sewell, £95, 020 7833 2995, www.wallacesewell.com.

4

5

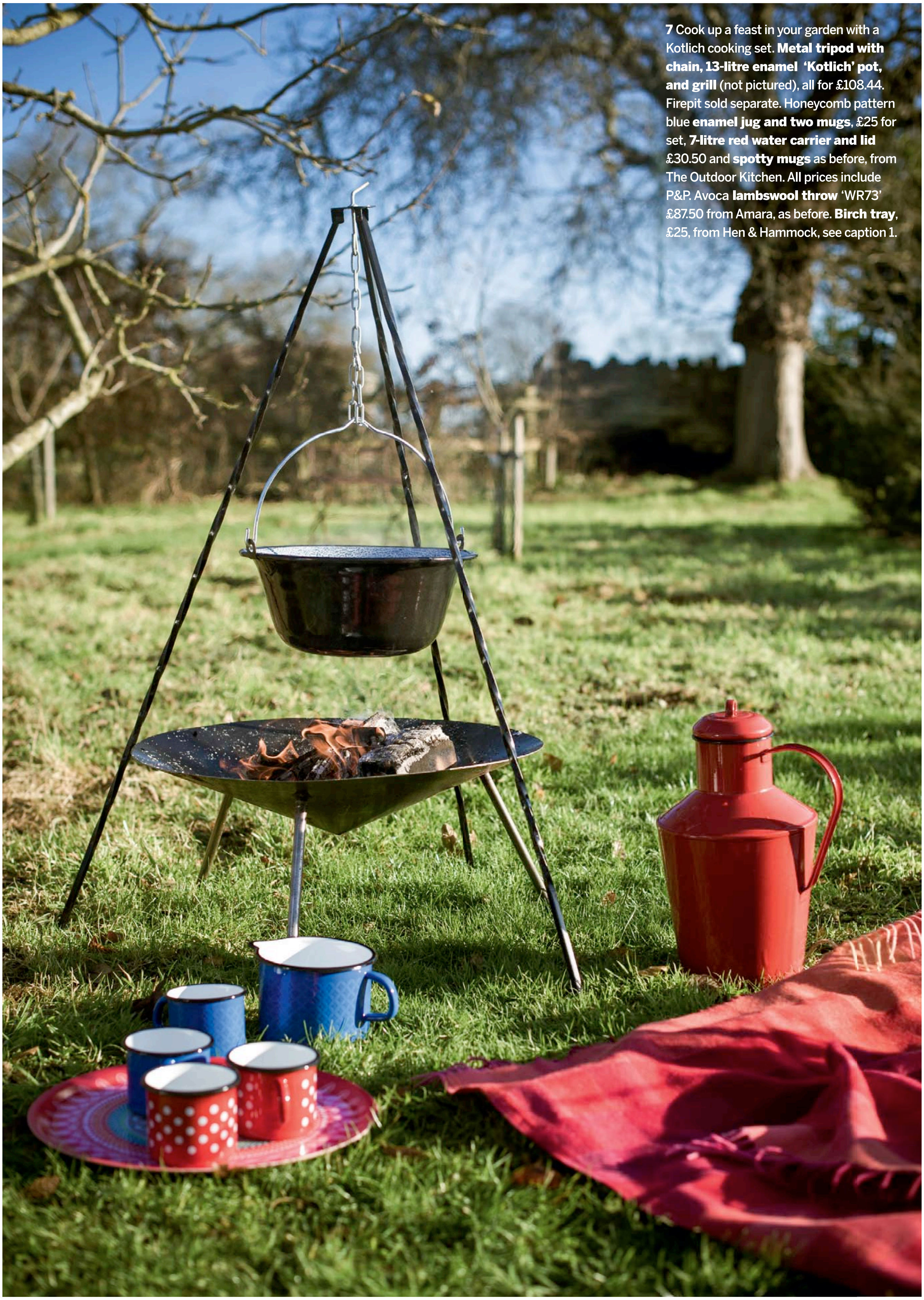
2 These **waterproof solar lanterns** will brighten up even the gloomiest of days. Available in twin packs of red or blue, £22.75 from London Garden Trading, 07774 444090, www.londongardentrading.com.

3 Keep your wood stocks replenished with this **small forest axe**, €81,50. **Kindling wood** containing wax will get your fire going in no time, €3.90, all from De Wiltfang, +31 (0)346 218111, www.dewiltfang.com.

4 Joe's 'All Seasons One' **gloves** are designed for breathability, comfort and warmth, £6.99, from garden centres, www.joes-garden.com, 0115 714 3533. Keep your toes thermally heated in these ladies **Heat Holder socks**, available in a range of sizes and colours, prices from £6, www.heatholders.com for stockist details. Birds on a Wire durable black plastic **clothes pegs**, £4.50 for 25 from Pedlars, 01330 850400, www.pedlars.co.uk.

5 Merino wool-lined **wellington boots** in French Grey from Ewe Style, £160, www.ewestyle.com

Shot on location at the home of garden designer Robin Pargeter, 07957 207067, www.rpgardendesign.co.uk.



7 Cook up a feast in your garden with a Kotlich cooking set. **Metal tripod with chain, 13-litre enamel 'Kotlich' pot, and grill** (not pictured), all for £108.44. Firepit sold separate. Honeycomb pattern blue **enamel jug and two mugs**, £25 for set, **7-litre red water carrier and lid** £30.50 and **spotty mugs** as before, from The Outdoor Kitchen. All prices include P&P. Avoca **lambswool throw** 'WR73' £87.50 from Amara, as before. **Birch tray**, £25, from Hen & Hammock, see caption 1.

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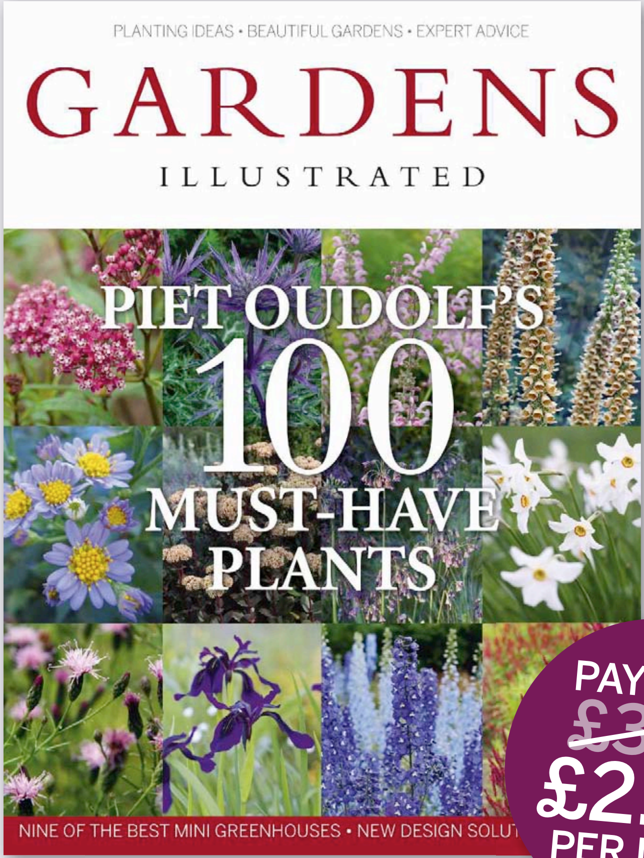
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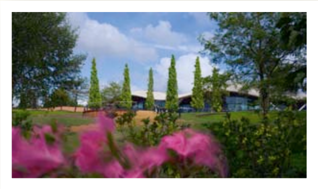

Quercus robur, 'Fastigiata Koster', The Savill Building, Windsor Great Park

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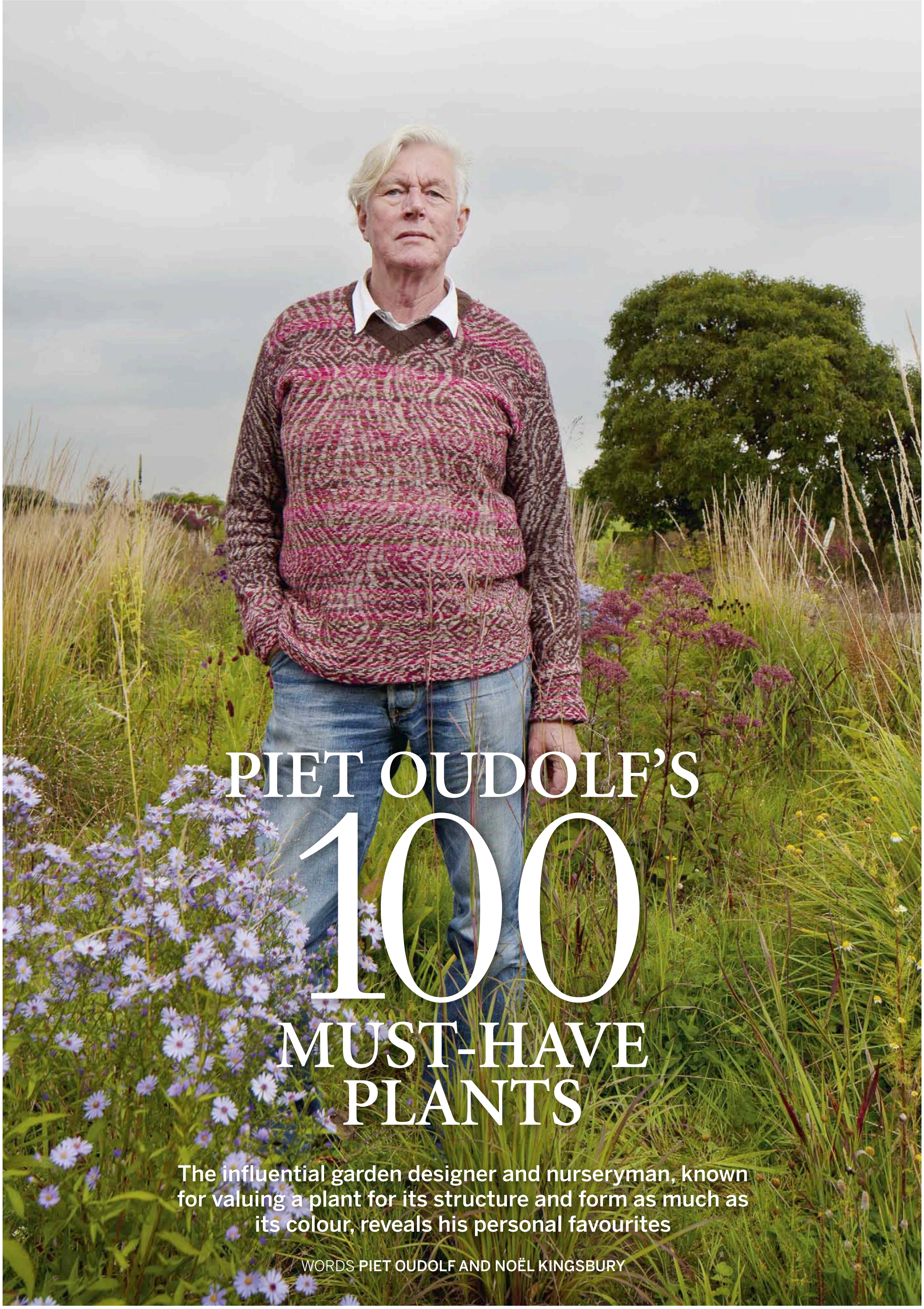

FRANK HANSWIJK

PIET OUDOLF'S 100 MUST-HAVE PLANTS

The influential garden designer and nurseryman, known for valuing a plant for its structure and form as much as its colour, reveals his personal favourites

WORDS **PIET OUDOLF AND NOËL KINGSBURY**

Short-season and filler plants

Useful for filling gaps earlier in the year, these plants have interest for less than three months, or good foliage but no real structure. Some look untidy after flowering.

1 ***ACONITUM CARMICHAELII* WILSONII GROUP**
Tall, upright and imposing late-flowering monkshoods with dark blue flowers shaped like helmets or hoods. Dark green, very divided foliage, but can look scruffy after flowering. Fertile soil in sun or light shade. SEASON Late summer to autumn. HARDINESS RATING (HR) RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a[†]. HEIGHT (H) 1.8m, SPREAD (S) 60cm.

2 ***BRIZA MEDIA***
Attractive pendant flowers and seedheads that move nicely in the breeze and are quite unlike any other grass, but do not last long. Best grown scattered among other perennials or intermingled with molinia grasses. Forming small clumps, it can self-seed aggressively. Needs sun and any reasonable soil. SEASON Early to mid summer. H 60cm, S 30cm.

3 ***DELPHINIUM ELATUM***
The wild ancestor of the familiar but fussy border plant. Spikes of small violet-blue flowers have an elegance and lightness of touch lost in the hybrids. Divided, lobed foliage gives the plants character before they flower. Moist but well-drained soils in full sun. SEASON Early to mid summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 2m, S 40cm.

4 ***EPIMEDIUM GRANDIFLORUM***
Heart-shaped leaves, red-tinged in spring, in steadily spreading clumps make for an effective foliage plant. The flowers, variable in colour, have intriguing little spurs and hang daintily from stems that lift them clear of the foliage. Humus-rich, moist but well-drained soils in shade. SEASON Spring. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 30cm, S 30cm. AGM*

5 ***GAURA LINDHEIMERI* 'WHIRLING BUTTERFLIES'**
The long rangy stems of *Gaura* have plenty of summer flowers – best to let them ramble over the clumps of earlier-flowering species or wind among the more upright stems of later-flowering ones. Short-lived. Well-drained soil, with poorer soils possibly extending life; needs sun. Cutting back to around 20cm in winter is advised. SEASON Mid to late summer. H 1m, S 80cm.

6 ***GERANIUM NODOSUM***
A deep pink-flowered geranium that forms spreading clumps, but not in the aggressive way of some others – it seeds around instead. Its foliage is relatively light with glossy three-pointed leaves that mingle and merge well with other perennials. Any reasonable soil, sun or shade, with some tolerance of dense and dry shade. SEASON Early to mid summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 20cm, S 30cm.

7 ***GERANIUM PSILOSTEMON***
Dark-eyed magenta flowers on a large plant creates real impact but it can be dull after flowering; perhaps best as an accompaniment to other plants with more structure. Large leaves, which sometimes colour well in autumn. Long-lived, slowly forming a solid clump. Best on fertile soils in sun or light shade. SEASON Mid summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.2m, S 1m. AGM*

8 ***GERANIUM WALLICHIANUM***
Pale-centred blue flowers on stems that spread out from a tight central clump, making it useful for running among taller plants and filling in gaps. Long-lived. Any reasonable soil in sun or light shade, drought tolerance. SEASON Mid to late summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 30cm, S 60cm.

9 ***HEUCHERA VILLOSA***
Heucheras are popular for their colourful leaves. This one is more useful for later-season flower – big loose spikes of cream; the leaves are good-sized, lobed and in the pure species a slightly grey-green. With time, plants form loose clumps. Any reasonable

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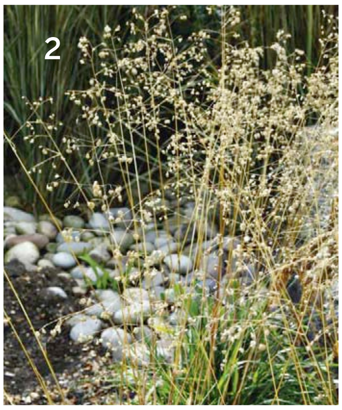
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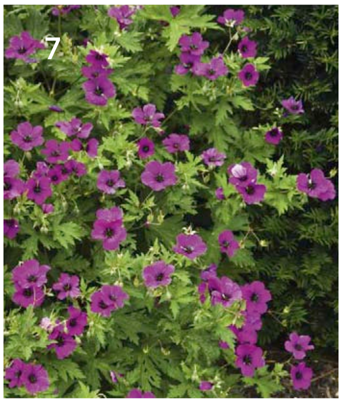
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*HOLDS AN RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT †HARDINESS RATINGS GIVEN WHERE AVAILABLE soil in sun or light shade; good in hot conditions and with some tolerance of dry shade. SEASON Mid to late summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 60cm, S 40cm.

10 ***IRIS CHRYSOGRAPHES***
The forms that have flowers in such dark purple they are almost black are unusual and dramatic. Its short flowering season suggests it is best scattered among other perennials; iris seedheads are always good value, while the linear foliage provides a good contrast with other perennials. Clump-forming. Moist but well-drained soil in sun or light shade. SEASON Early summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 50cm, 40cm. AGM*

11 ***LATHYRUS VERNUS***
This is a good early season filler in combination with larger later-flowering perennials, with blue or purple flowers (or pink, as with *L. Vernus* 'Alboroseus', pictured) and neat long-lived and non-spreading clumps of divided green leaves. Can be slow to establish, best in moist, well-drained soil in light shade. SEASON Late spring. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 35cm, S 50cm. AGM*

12 ***MAIANTHEMUM RACEMOSA***
The plumes of creamy white flowers do not last well, but the dark green leaves arranged in pairs on each side of the stem provide structure. Forms large clumps. Needs moist, well-drained, humus-rich soil in light shade. SEASON Spring. H 1.0m, S 0.6m. AGM*

13 ***MERTENSIA VIRGINICA***
Very blue flowers appear close to the ground in spring, alongside bulbs but well before most perennial growth. The foliage is summer dormant, so the plant's life cycle complements summer-flowering perennials and it can prosper with other perennials or grass clumps. Reasonable soil; good in shade. SEASON Spring. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 25cm, S 30cm. AGM*

14 ***PAPAVER ORIENTALE* 'KARINE'**
An 'oriental poppy' with soft pink petals, shaped into a neat and graceful shallow bowl. Its mound of divided hairy leaves dies by mid summer, leaving a gap. Long-lived, forming a small clump. Any reasonable soil in full sun. SEASON Early summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 70cm, S 60cm. AGM*

15 ***PHLOX DIVARICATA***
One of several ground-covering phloxes with a sweeter scent than the border species. Varieties available in blue, purple or white. Capable of spreading far and wide, but not interesting out of flower so probably best used to form patches in small spaces. Moist but well-drained, humus-rich soil in light shade. SEASON Late spring to early summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 20cm, S 30cm. AGM*

16 ***SALVIA AZUREA***
Clear blue flowers on slender floppy stems, best allowed to grow among more upright plants. Capable of flowering for long periods if kept moist, but otherwise is tolerant of any reasonable soil even if dry. Needs sun. SEASON Summer. H 2m, S 60cm.

17 ***TRICYRTIS FORMOSANA***
Stems have a nice arching shape. As late-blooming plants they never look untidy. Forms clumps on humus-rich and moist but well-drained soils in shade. Not suitable for regions with early autumn frosts. SEASON Late summer to autumn. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 90cm, S 50cm. AGM*

Medium-length season plants

These species retain interest for at least three months because of their foliage, structure and seedheads as well as flowers.

18 ***ACANTHUS SPINOSUS* L**
Large leaves with deep divisions make an early appearance in the garden although they can look untidy later. Upright flower spikes follow in mid summer. Any reasonable soil, although if very dry plants become dormant. Sun or in warm summer climates, light shade. SEASON Mid to late summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.4m, S 1m. AGM*

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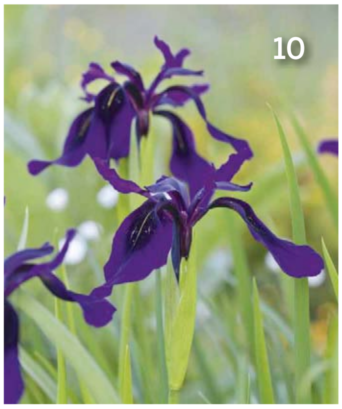

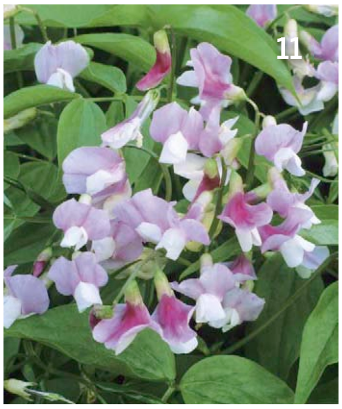

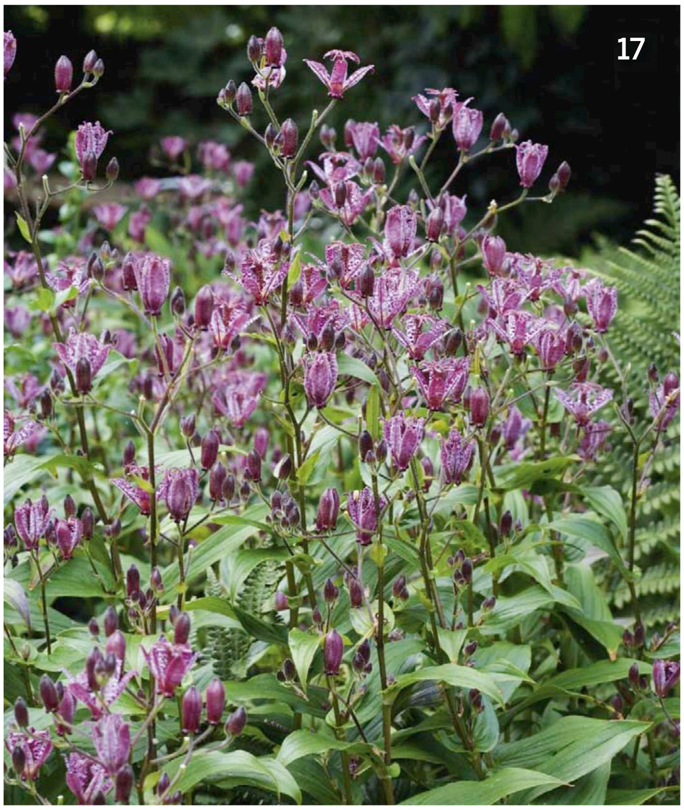

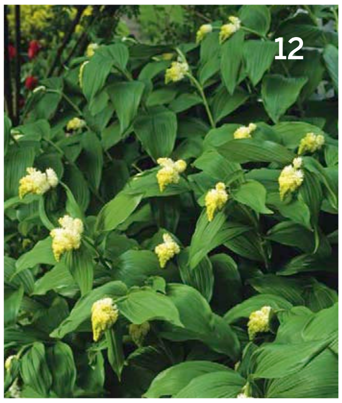

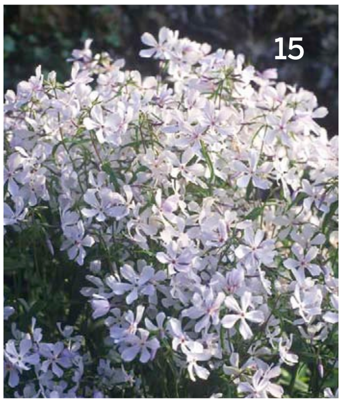

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15 ADRIAN BLOOM / GAP PHOTOS. 17 MADDIE THORNHILL / GAP PHOTOS

▷ 19 ***ACHILLEA FILIPENDULINA* 'PARKER'S VARIETY'**
Good-sized golden-yellow umbels of flowers on unbranched stems bring together an uncommon colour and good structure. The silver-grey foliage is finely divided. Unlike many *Achillea*, this is truly perennial. Average to dry soils, including poor ones; full sun. SEASON Mid summer to early autumn, often for several months; good winter seedheads. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.4m, S 80cm. AGM*

20 ***ADIANTUM PEDATUM***
A simple, modest fern with fronds divided into small leaflets which, along with its running habit, makes it very useful for letting loose among other shade-loving plants. Prefers humus-rich, moist, well-drained soil in shade. SEASON Spring to autumn. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 40cm, S 40cm. AGM*

21 ***AMORPHA CANESCENS***
Leaves divided into small leaflets with unusual grey-purple flowers in tight elongated clusters. Its bushy habit and mysterious colouring make for a distinct contrast with other perennials. Any reasonable soil; sun. SEASON Mid to late summer. H 1.2m, S 1.5m.

22 ***AMSONIA TABERNAEMONTANA* VAR. *SALICIFOLIA***
An upright habit with narrow leaves and steely-blue flower clusters. Continues to look good after flowering, with clear yellow autumn colour. Slowly forms solid, long-lived clumps. Average soils in sun or very light shade. SEASON Early to mid summer, plus autumn foliage. H 1m, S 50cm.

23 ***ANEMONE* X *HYBRIDA* 'HONORINE JOBERT'**
Pure white, rounded flowers up to 6cm across shine out in shade, above robust-looking leaves divided into multiple leaflets. Average soils, preferably fertile ones, in sun or moderate shade. Like all 'Japanese anemones' it can take several years to establish but will then survive for years, spreading inexorably. SEASON Late summer to mid autumn. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.2m, S 80cm. AGM*

24 ***ARTEMISIA LACTIFLORA***
Tall, upright stems with loose panicles of tiny creamy flowers emerge from a tight clump, with dark medium-sized divided leaves. A 'background plant' good for mixing with other perennials of a similar height such as asters. Moist, well-drained soil essential. SEASON Mid summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.5m, S 50cm. AGM*

25 ***ASCLEPIAS INCARNATA***
A milkweed with clusters of intricately shaped pink flowers, popular with butterflies. Short-lived pointed seedheads burst open to produce fluff-coated seed. Upright-growing from a tight base, it is relatively short-lived, often little more than biennial. Does best in fertile, average to wet soils in sun. SEASON Mid to late summer. H 1m, S 40cm.

26 ***ASTER OBLONGIFOLIUS* 'OCTOBER SKIES'**
Unusual among asters, this grows horizontally with stiff stems supporting masses of lavender-blue flowers over slightly greyish foliage giving the impression of a dwarf shrub. Average to dry soils; sun. SEASON Late summer to autumn. H 60cm, S 60cm.

27 ***ASTER TATARICUS* 'JINDAI'**
Purple daisy flowers in a flat-topped bunch above stiffly upright stems give this Asian aster a very different feel to the looser flower clusters of the other species. Spreading habit when established. Very hardy. Does well in any reasonable soil; sun. SEASON Autumn to first frosts. H 1.2m, S 70cm.

28 ***ASTER UMBELLATUS***
A wild-looking aster with creamy flowers atop upright stems followed by seedheads that catch autumn light beautifully. It spreads widely but not aggressively, mixing in well with tall grasses and more colourful late perennials such as *Persicaria amplexicaulis* as a background plant. Average to wet soils; sun. SEASON Autumn. H 2m, S 1m. ▷

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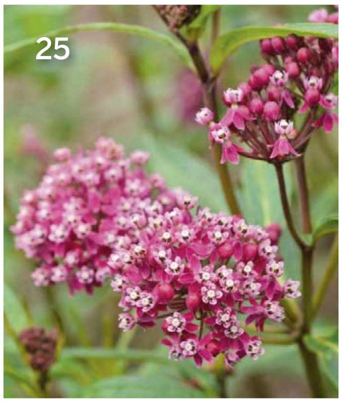
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▷ 29 *ASTRANTIA MAJOR* SUBSP. *INVOLUCRATA*

One of the best of a large number of variations, this vigorous, long-flowering perennial has button-shaped flower-clusters in every shade from dark red to off-white. Vigorous and slowly spreading, it does not seed. Any reasonable soil, sun or light shade. Dislikes drought or hot summers. SEASON Summer. H 90cm, S 50cm.

30 *CALAMAGROSTIS BRACHYTRICHA*

An elegant grass with purple-tinged plumes on upright stems and neat clumps of fresh green leaves. It forms a tight tussock that does not spread. Any reasonable soil; full sun. SEASON Mid summer to autumn. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.2m, S 60cm. AGM*

31 *CLEMATIS HERACLEIFOLIA*

This non-climbing clematis has branching, woody stems that form a framework for a mound of attractive divided foliage and small, pale blue flowers, followed by fluffy silver seedheads. Light pruning needed in late winter. Average soils in sun. SEASON Mid to late summer. H 1.2m, S 1m.

32 *CRAMBE CORDIFOLIA*

A big expansive plant that needs space to show off its dark green leaves and enormous heads of tiny white flowers. Similarly large seedheads follow, which occasionally detach and roll around like tumbleweed or mobile sculptures. Long-lived and clump-forming. Average soil in sun. SEASON Early summer. H 1.2m, S to 2m. AGM*

33 *DATISCA CANNABINA*

A tall, rather dramatic-looking plant, which looks tempting and offers the joy of cannabis foliage without the court appearance. Deeply divided foliage and rather pendant plumes of tiny greenish flowers. Effective with other tall perennials such as eupatoriums. Fertile, moist but well-drained soils; full sun. SEASON All summer. H 2.2m, S 80cm.

34 *ECHINOPS BANNATICUS*

The perfect spheres of echinops make an important contribution to summer borders, contrasting with other flowerhead shapes. This species has purple-blue flowers, and its large divided leaves are not as spiny and thistle-like as most others. Rarely lives more than ten years. Any reasonable soil in full sun. SEASON Mid to late summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.5m, S 90cm.

35 *ERAGROSTIS SPECTABILIS*

This grass produces clouds of fine scattered flowers and seedheads through which relatively broad basal leaves are visible, looking good with lower-growing perennials. Short-lived and sometimes strongly self-seeding, it is effective in drifts. Any reasonable soil, including dry ones; full sun. SEASON Late summer to autumn. H 50cm, S 80cm.

36 *EUPHORBIA GRIFFITHII*

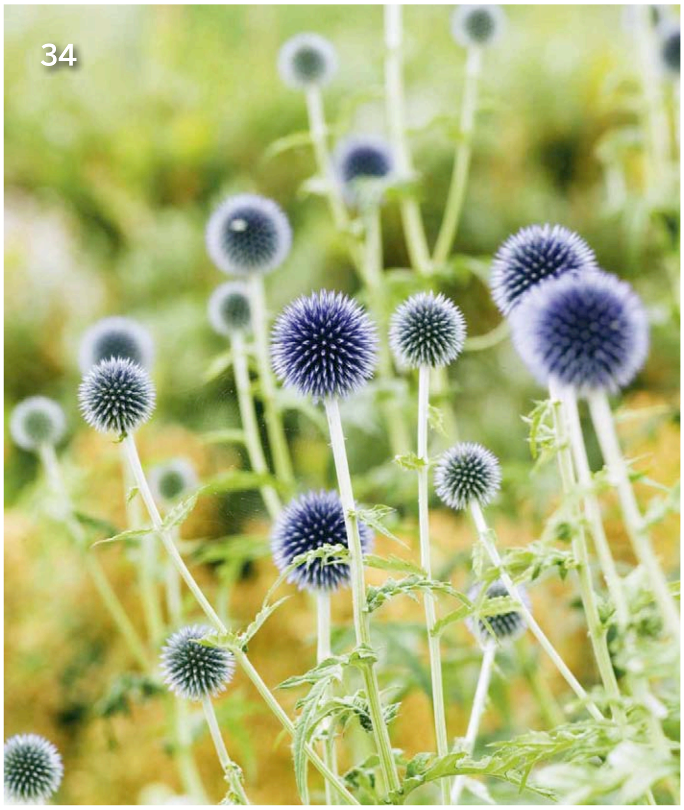
Dark red bracts surround the flowers, quite unlike the familiar yellow-green of other euphorbias. These top upright stems with neat dark narrow leaves. Its wandering habit is useful in borders, although eventually it will form a large clump. Any reasonable soil; sun or light shade. SEASON Early to mid summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 60cm, S 80cm.

37 *FILIPENDULA RUBRA* 'VENUSTA'

Fluffy diffuse plumes of tiny pink flowers help to bridge the gap between early summer low-level flowerers and later summer mid to higher level ones. Large divided leaves. Slowly forms large open clumps. Fertile preferably moist soil in full sun. SEASON Early mid summer. H 2m, S 1m. AGM*

38 *GENTIANA ASCLEPIADEA*

Deep gentian blue flowers on arching leafy stems radiate out from a narrow base. Colour intensity varies between plants, so best to buy in flower, or grow from seed. Slow to establish but long-lived; older plants are magnificent. Average to heavy soils, cool and moist but well-drained, in sun or light shade. SEASON Mid to late summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 80cm, S 80cm. AGM*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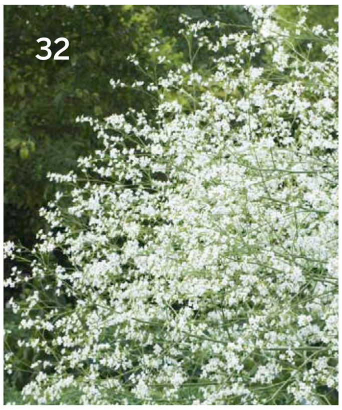
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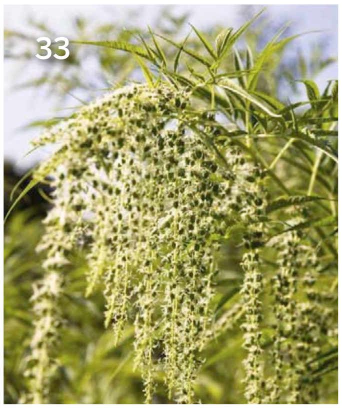
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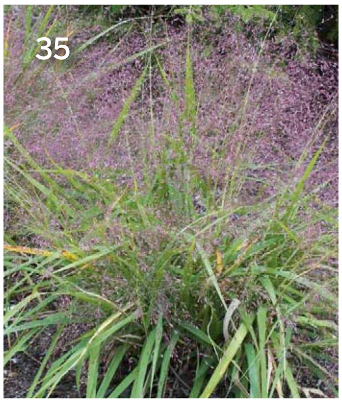
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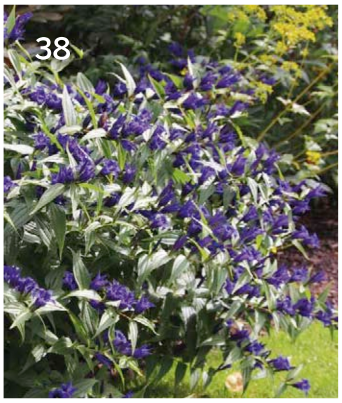
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32 RICHARD BLOOM / GAP PHOTOS, 33 SHARON PEARSON / GAP PHOTOS, 34 PAUL DEBOIS / GAP PHOTOS,
35 GILES DELACROIX / GARDEN WORLD IMAGES, 38 MARTIN HUGHES-JONES / GAP PHOTOS

▷ 39 ***HAKONECHLOA MACRA***
Needs plenty of moisture and warm humid summers to produce unique carpets of broad, gently arching, fresh green leaves. Good planted en masse as well as individually. Best on humus-rich soils; intolerant of sun and drought in drier climates. SEASON Summer to autumn. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 60cm, S 50cm.

40 ***HELLEBORUS MULTIFIDUS* SUBSP. *HERCEGOVINUS***
A mound of extremely divided leaves make this hellebore a potentially valuable foliage plant. Its yellow-green flowers do not make much impact. Long-lived and slow-growing, it forms tight clumps in time. Any reasonable soil in sun, or light shade; in warm summer climates shade is preferred. SEASON All year as a foliage plant. H 30cm, S 50cm.

41 ***KIRENGESHOMA PALMATA***
An extremely elegant plant with pale green, almost maple-like leaves and waxy, soft-yellow, bell-shaped flowers. Slow-growing but long-lived, forming dense clumps. Light shade, humus-rich, moist, well-drained soils. SEASON Mid to late summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 90cm, S 60cm. AGM*

42 ***LYSIMACHIA EPHEMERUM***
Small white flowers clustered on upright spires with grey leaves. It's worth noting that grey foliage is very rare among shade-tolerant plants. Stands well and looks good in winter. Moist, well-drained soil in sun or light shade. SEASON Mid summer. H 1.2m, S 40cm.

43 ***MISCANTHUS SINENSIS* 'MALEPARTUS'**
Flowers reliably, with reddish-brown plumes turning to silvery seedheads above fine arching leaves, each of which has a distinct white stripe. Very long-lived, forming large clumps in time. Any fertile soil, including moist but not waterlogged ones; sun or very light shade. SEASON Mid summer to late winter. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 2.2m, S 1m.

44 ***MOLINIA CAERULEA* SUBSP. 'MOORHEXE'**
A grass with dark chestnut-brown flowers/seedheads that thrust skywards. Very effective en masse as well as mixed in with shorter-flowering perennials. Long-lived tight, non-spreading clumps. Any reasonable soil including poor ones; sun or light shade. SEASON Mid summer to early winter. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.1m, S 50cm.

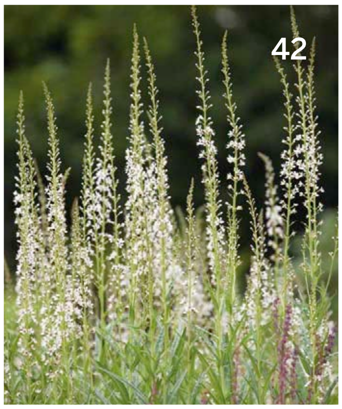
45 ***PAEONIA* 'EARLY WINDFLOWER'**
This very superior cultivar has pure white, single, bowl-shaped flowers with a central boss of yellow stamens and deeply divided leaves, bronze in tone when they first emerge. Slow-growing, long-lived. Fertile, moist but well-drained soil in sun or light shade. SEASON Spring. H 80cm, S 70cm.

46 ***PANICUM VIRGATUM* 'SHENANDOAH'**
A grass with large cloud-like panicles of tiny flowers/seeds, its main feature is the red tones of its leaves, which begin to develop in mid summer and are a rich burgundy by autumn. Long-lived, slowly forming clumps. Takes time to establish in cool summer climates, and always late to emerge in spring. Fertile soil; sun. SEASON Late summer to late winter. H 1.2m, S 90cm.

47 ***PERSICARIA AMPLEXICAULIS***
Slender spikes with dark red 'tails' stand above dense large oval leaves, which give the plant a compact bushy shape. Collapses with frost. Long-lived, forming large clumps. Fertile, moist soil in sun or light shade. SEASON Mid summer to autumn. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.5m, S 1m.

48 ***RUDBECKIA SUBTOMENTOSA***
A prairie rudbeckia with good upright structure as well as great colour. Upright stems with the familiar dark-centred, golden-yellow daisy flowers. Long-lived forming clumps that spread only slowly. Any reasonable soil, but likes moist and well-drained in sun or very light shade. SEASON Late summer. H 1.6m, S 80cm.

49 ***RUELLIA HUMILIS***
Large, open, five-petalled lilac flowers above chunky lobed leaves. A new species in ▷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42 RICHARD BLOOM / GAP PHOTOS, 43 MATT ANKER / GAP PHOTOS, 45 HOWARD RICE / GAP PHOTOS, 47 MMGI / MARIANNE MAJERUS , 48 MARTIN HUGHES-JONES / ALAMY

▷ cultivation. It starts into growth very late and is long flowering. Happy on any reasonable soil in full sun; possibly unsuitable for cool summer climates. SEASON Mid summer to autumn. H 60cm, S 60cm.

50 ***SALVIA X SYLVESTRIS* ‘DEAR ANJA’**
Purple-blue flowers in spikes with a distinct pale lip over a long period. Can be short-lived and does not seed, but easy from spring cuttings. Any reasonable soil, thriving on drier alkaline ones; sun. SEASON Summer. H 90cm, S 30cm.

51 ***SALVIA PRATENSIS* ‘PINK DELIGHT’**
A relatively new *Salvia* cultivar with lavender-flushed pink flowers in spikes, starting early; repeat flowering is encouraged by dead-heading, as with all these European meadow salvias. Successful in hot summer climates. Any reasonable soil, thriving on drier alkaline ones; sun. SEASON Summer. H 0.9m, S 0.3m.

52 ***SANGUISORBA TENUIFOLIA* ‘PURPUREA’**
Sanguisorbas are valuable for their big see-through sprays of small bobble-shaped flower heads. Most flop but this is an exception, and its deep red heads have an attractive purple bloom. Long-lived, forming a tight minimally spreading clump. Any reasonable soil, preferably moist; sun. SEASON Mid summer to early autumn. H 1.6m, S 70cm.

53 ***SCUTELLARIA INCANA***
Spikes of soft grey-blue tubular flowers that open out to a distinct beak above slightly grey leaves on upright stems. Beautiful but subtle and must not be crowded. Forms clumps. Any reasonable soil, preferably light, in full sun. Very prone to slug damage. SEASON Mid to late summer. H 90cm, S 60cm.

54 ***SELINUM WALLICHIANUM***
Big flat-topped lacy heads of white flowers, very divided almost filigree foliage and good seedheads. Adds elegance and a sense of structure to naturalistic plantings. Short-lived unfortunately, but can self-sow. Any reasonable soil in sun or light shade. SEASON Mid summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.5m, S 60cm.

55 ***SPODIOPOGON SIBIRICUS***
A grass whose pale brown flower/seed panicles complement distinctive clumps of broad leaves. A good late-season contrast to *Aster* and *Persicaria*. Little winter interest however. Long-lived, slowly forming large clumps; can take time to establish. Fertile soil in sun or very light shade. SEASON Mid summer to winter. H 1.2m, S 90cm.

56 ***THALICTRUM DELAVAYI***
A very elegant perennial whose large leaves, much divided into multiple leaflets, look good for months before the sprays of small lavender-pink flowers emerge. They need space around them to be appreciated. With time it forms tight, non-spreading clumps. Any reasonable soil in sun or light shade; possibly better in cool summer climates. SEASON Mid to late summer HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.5m, S 60cm. AGM*

57 ***THALICTRUM ROCHEBRUNIANUM***
Heads of tiny lavender flowers in moderately loose sprays create a ‘transparent’ effect – subtle but very beautiful. Elegant dark purple stems and leaves. Long-lived but forms only very tight clumps. Fertile, moist, well-drained soils best, disliking hot summers. It may need staking. SEASON Mid to late summer. H 2m, S 60cm.

58 ***THALICTRUM* ‘ELIN’**
A new *Thalictrum* hybrid with bold clumps of blue-flushed leaves and sturdy stems that carry sprays of cream flowers, ageing to pink. It continues to stand firmly even after flowering. A very useful tall upright for earlier in the year. Long-lived, forming slowly spreading tight clumps. Fertile, moist but well-drained soils best; dislikes hot summers. SEASON Early summer. H 2.5m, S 0.7m.

59 ***VERNONIA NOVEBORACENSIS***
Deep violet-purple flowers top tall, stiffly upright stems with dark leaves. A companion for larger *Eupatorium* or *Aster umbellatus*.

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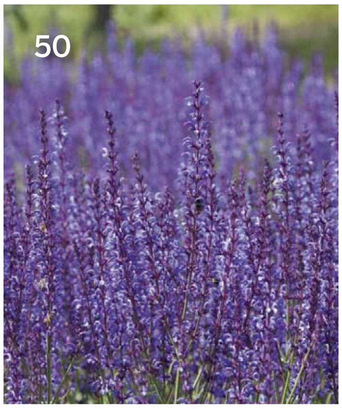
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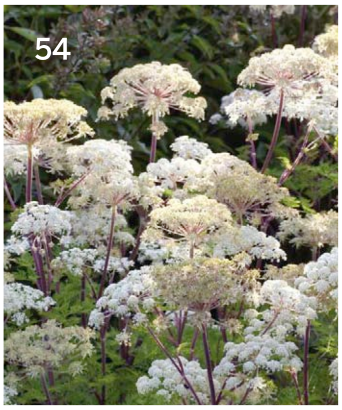
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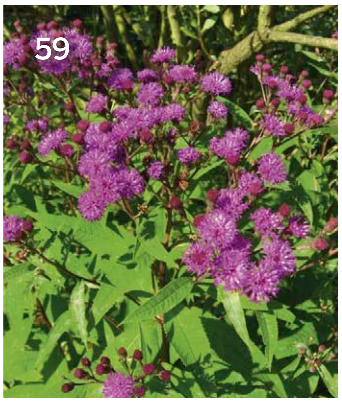
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50 TOMMY TONSBERG / GAP PHOTOS. 51 STEFFEN HAUSER / BOTANIKFOTO / ALAMY. 54 ELKE BORKOWSKI / GAP PHOTOS.
57 CAROLE DRAKE / GAP PHOTOS. 59 BLICKWINKEL / ALAMY

Long-lived, slowly forming clumps, although can take time to establish. SEASON Autumn. H 1.9m, S 50cm.

Long-season plants

Perennials, grasses and ferns, with interest for at least nine months because of good foliage structure and seedheads.

60 ***ACTAEA SIMPLEX* (ATROPURPUREA GROUP) 'JAMES COMPTON'**
Dark purple divided leaves with tall narrow spires of pink flowers. Some seedhead interest. Long-lived, forming dense clumps. Moist, but well-drained soil essential, especially in sun; shade is also needed in warm summer climates. SEASON Late summer to early autumn. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.2m, S 70cm.

61 ***AMSONIA ORIENTALIS***
Heads of grey-blue star-shaped flowers on upright stems with narrow leaves, with yellow autumn colour. Some seedhead interest. Clump-forming and spreading. Average soil, damp but well-drained is best in sun or light shade. SEASON Late spring to early summer, plus autumn foliage. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 80cm, S 50cm.

62 ***ASTER X HERVEYI***
One of the best of the lower-growing asters with large violet-blue flowers that have orange-brown centres. It spreads but can be weak-stemmed. Any reasonable soil in sun or light shade, including dry shade. SEASON Late summer to autumn. H 90cm, S 80cm.

63 ***BAPTISIA AUSTRALIS***
A mound of small greyish foliage with indigo blue pea-like flowers and inflated seed pods. Slowly spreading clumps, long-lived, but can take time to establish. Any reasonable soil in sun. SEASON Late summer to autumn. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.4m, S 1m. AGM*

64 ***BAPTISIA ALBA***
A majestic perennial with divided leaves and spikes of white flowers on contrasting dark stems held well clear of greyish leaves on branching stems. Good seed heads. Can be slow in early years, but very long-lived, forming a slowly expanding clump. Average to dry soils; sun. SEASON Early summer. H 1.2m, S 90cm.

65 ***CALAMINTHA NEPETA* SUBSP. *NEPETA***
Extremely useful for filling in gaps as it does not spread but its stems sprawl out to cover the ground. Particularly effective interplanted among upwardly thrusting grasses, such as *Molinia* species. Masses of very pale lilac flowers over a long season, some winter interest. Popular with bees. Any reasonable soil; sun. SEASON Mid summer to autumn. H 40cm, S 50cm.

66 ***DARMERA PELTATA***
Big round heads of dull pink flowers on tall stems that appear in spring without any leaves. Patience is rewarded by large round leaves (up to 50cm wide) that turn red-orange in autumn. Its muscular roots slowly spread to form large mats, making it useful for binding wet muddy banks – its ideal growing place. SEASON Spring. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 90cm, S 1.5m. AGM*

67 ***DIGITALIS FERRUGINEA***
Tall, very narrow spikes of tightly packed flowers coloured intricately in brown, fawn and cream, maturing to good seedheads. Best appreciated in clumps looming out of early morning mist. Biennial or short-lived perennial. Average to dry soils; sun. SEASON Early to mid summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 2.2m, S 25cm. AGM*

68 ***ECHINACEA PURPUREA* 'VIRGIN'**
A pure white echinacea with a dark green central cone. The double layer of outer petals have toothed tips and held horizontally so it makes a clear 'daisy' impression. Big, solid, dark seedheads. Often short-lived. Fertile soil in sun. SEASON Mid summer to early autumn. H 90cm, S 50cm.

69 ***ERYNGIUM BOURGATII***
A low spiky perennial with thistle-like white and blue-grey flowers and tough grey

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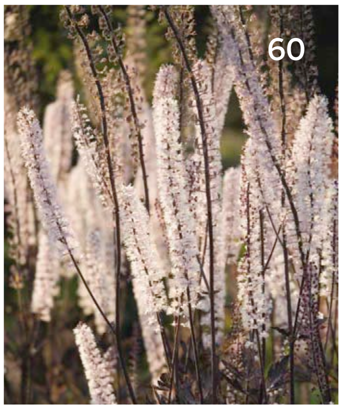
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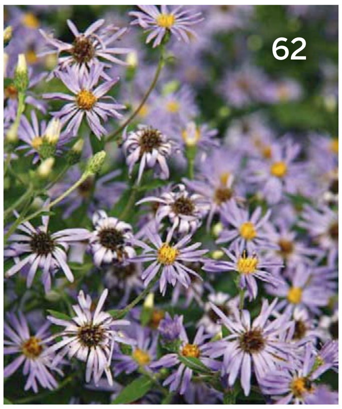
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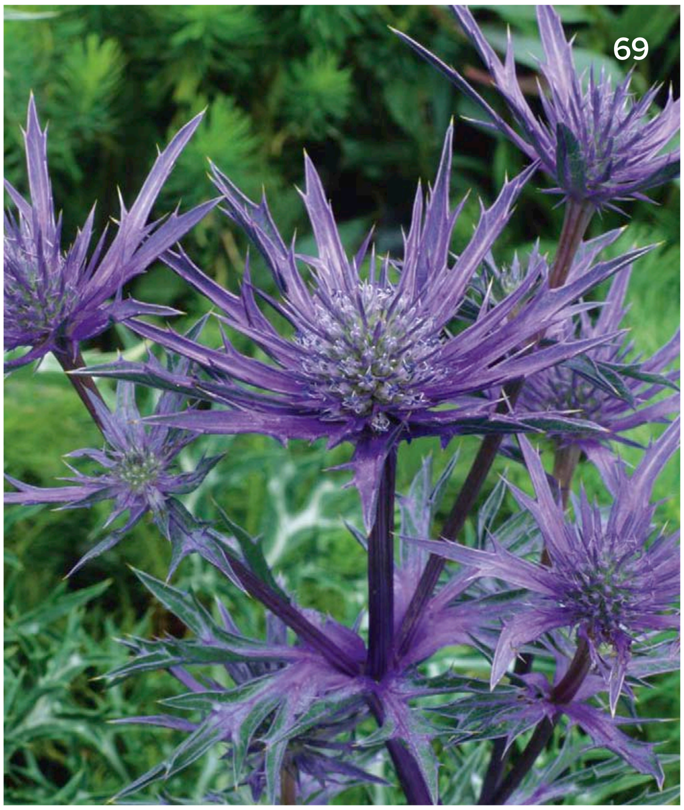
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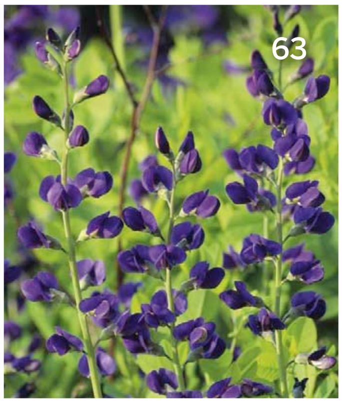
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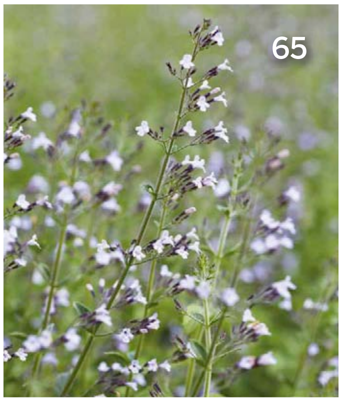
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60 CLIVE NICHOLS / GAP PHOTOS. 62 MARTIN HUGHES-JONES / GAP PHOTOS. 63 J S SIRA / GAP PHOTOS.
65 ROB WHITWORTH / GAP PHOTOS. 69 HOLMES GARDEN PHOTOS / ALAMY

▷ divided leaves. Exceptionally good, long season of structure for a low-growing plant. Long-lived, slowly forming clumps. Average to dry soils, tolerant of poor subsoil too; sun. SEASON Early to late summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 50cm, S 40cm.

70 ***EUPATORIUM MACULATUM***

A tall plant with pink flowers in umbel-shaped heads atop sturdy red stems. There are several other closely related species and forms of varying height. Long-lived, slowly forming clumps. Fertile, average to moist soils; full sun. SEASON Mid to late summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.8m, S 80cm.

71 ***FESTUCA MAIREI***

A neat medium-sized grass that forms a tight clump of usually evergreen foliage with small flower and seed spikes. Non-spreading, long-lived. Sun and average to dry soils. It does not need heat to grow, but tolerates high summer temperatures. SEASON Mid summer to early autumn. H 1m, S 60cm.

72 ***GILLENIA TRIFOLIATA***

Small, pure-white, star-shaped flowers held in loose sprays on wiry red stems above bushy clumps of narrow leaves. Works well with chunkier-looking plants. Good cut flower. Moist, well-drained soil in sun or light shade. SEASON Early to mid summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.1m, S 70cm. AGM*

73 ***HELENIUM* 'MOERHEIM BEAUTY'**

The bobble head and ring of surrounding rays are brown and orange-red respectively. Upright stems and fresh green foliage. Clump-forming, but needs repropagating every few years. Fertile moist, but well-drained soil; full sun. SEASON Mid to late summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.2m, S 60cm. AGM*

74 ***INULA MAGNIFICA* 'SONNENSTRAHL'**

Tall upright stems carry yellow daisies, distinctive for their fine outer petals. Broad leaves up to 50cm long. *Inula* dislike drought but this is one of the more tolerant. Fertile soil in sun. SEASON Mid summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 2.2m, S 80cm. AGM*

75 ***IRIS SIBIRICA* 'PERRY'S BLUE'**

Big blue flowers are followed by brown seedheads on sturdy stems that make a good winter feature. Steadily forms large clumps of linear foliage. Very resilient, potentially very long-lived. Any reasonable soil; sun. SEASON Early summer. H 70cm, S 60cm.

76 ***LIMONIUM PLATYPHYLLUM***

A fine haze of tiny purple flowers above broad smooth-textured leaves. Long-lived and dependable. Any reasonable soil in sun; tolerant of drought and poor soils. SEASON Mid to late summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 70cm, S 60cm.

77 ***LYCHNIS CHALCEDONICA* 'ROSEA'**

Upright stems with bright green leaves support tight heads of pink cross-shaped flowers, turning into prominent seedheads that stand into winter. Long-lived, forming tight clumps. Any reasonable soil, including dry ones; sun. SEASON Early summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1m, S 30cm.

78 ***MACLEAYA X KEWENSIS***

Magnificent grey-brown leaves on upright grey stems and plumes of very small pale brown flowers make an impact that is somehow both striking and subtle. This species is long-lived but not invasive. Fertile soils in sun or light shade; can be slow to establish. SEASON Mid to late summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 2.2m, S 1m.

79 ***MONARDA BRADBURYANA***

Pale pink flowers dotted with darker spots; good winter structure. Upright habit and a minty aroma to flowers and foliage. Forms clumps in sun or very light shade; most soils including dry ones. SEASON Early to mid summer. H 60cm, S 60cm.

80 ***OSMUNDA REGALIS***

A gigantic deciduous fern with wide-spreading fronds, minimally divided, and on older plants, brown upright fertile fronds. Slow to establish but very long-lived, only liking moist but not waterlogged acidic ▷

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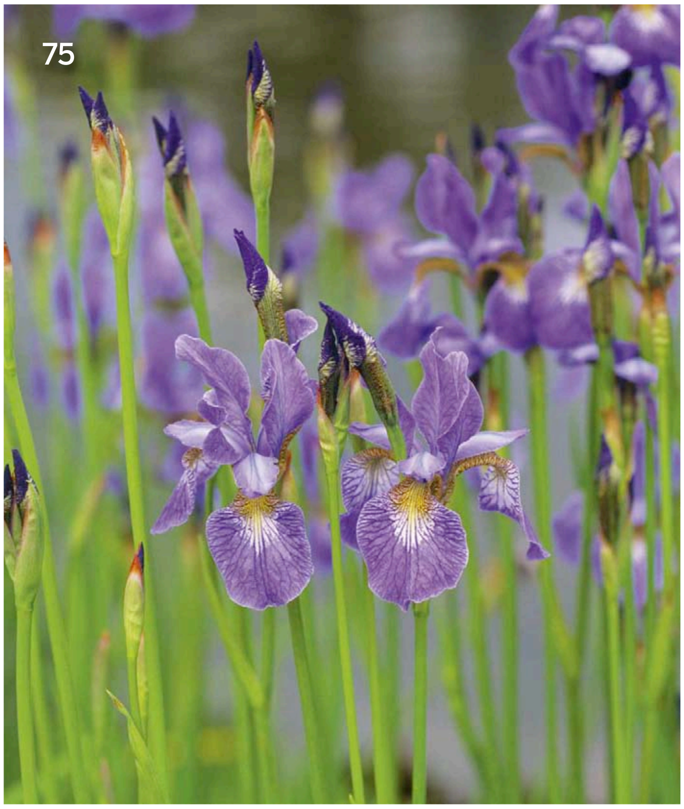

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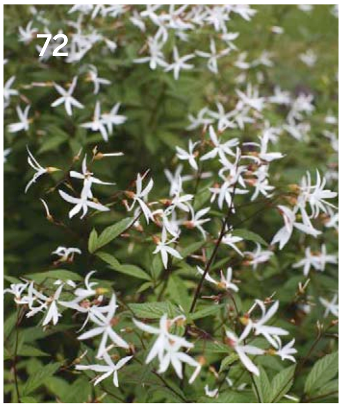

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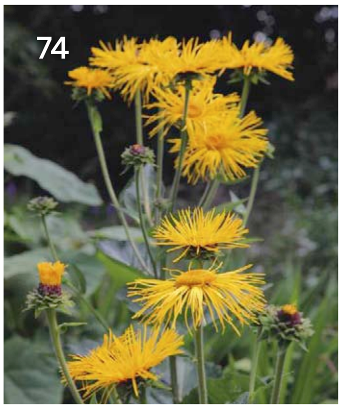

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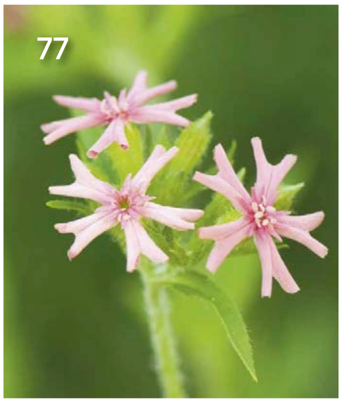

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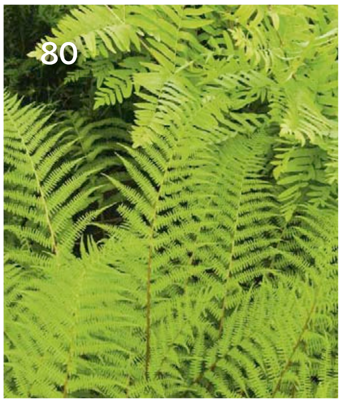


72 PERNILLA BERGDAHL / GAP HOTOS, 74 MARTIN HUGHES-JONES / GAP PHOTOS, 75 MMGI / MARIANNE MAJERUS , 77 CAROLE DRAKE / GARDEN PICTURE LIBRARY / GETTY IMAGES, 80 CAROLE DRAKE - COURTESY JURGEN SCHEDLER / GAP PHOTOS

67 MARG COUSENS / GAP PHOTOS

▷ soils; sun or light shade. SEASON Summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.5m, S 1m. AGM*

81 ***PHLOMIS TUBEROSA***

Whorls of dull red-pink flowers on upright stems above large, dark green, heart-shaped leaves. A relatively new perennial with a long season and much potential. 'Amazone' does not flop. Forms a clump, seeds strongly in some situations. Any reasonable soil; full sun. SEASON Mid summer. H 1.4m, S 80cm.

82 ***POLYSTICHUM SETIFERUM***

Compact, with densely packed usually evergreen fronds, it is a good contrast to the broad or smooth leaves common among shade-loving perennials such as hostas or epimediums. Sun or shade in any reasonable soil. SEASON Most of the year. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 60cm, S 60cm. AGM*

83 ***PYCNANTHEMUM MUTICUM***

Silvery, minty-scented foliage on upright stems, with small white flowers surrounded by silver-grey bracts. Steadily forms large clumps. Any reasonable soil, although fertile, moist, well-drained preferred; sun or light shade. SEASON Mid to late summer. H 1m, S 80cm.

84 ***RODGERSIA* 'DIE ANMUTIGE'**

Particularly fine rich bronze and pink-flushed flower heads. It may take a long time to establish but it's long-lived and eventually forms spreading clumps. Moist but not waterlogged soils in light shade are best. SEASON Mid summer. H 1.2m, S 1m.

85 ***SEDUM* 'MATRONA'**

Dull green leaves that flush purple in autumn and flat-topped seedheads in pink, opening from pale creamy buds. Good seedheads for winter. Fine long-season structure plant. SEASON Late summer to autumn. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 70cm, S 60cm. AGM*

86 ***SEDUM TELEPHIUM* 'SUNKISSED'**

Flattish heads of creamy-green flowers give way to red-tinged seedheads over grey foliage; popular with butterflies. Long-lived but not spreading. Full sun in most reasonable soils; very drought tolerant. SEASON Late summer to autumn. H 50cm, S 50cm.

87 ***SERRATULA SEOANEI***

An unusual late-flowering member of the daisy family with a stiff mound of very divided dark green foliage and pink flowers, followed by persistent winter seedheads. Forming tight clumps over time. Any reasonable, well-drained soil; sun. SEASON Late summer to autumn. H 40cm, S 40cm.

88 ***SPOROBOLUS HETEROLEPIS***

Large panicles of tiny flowers/seedheads form a cloud-like mass over a dense clump of narrow leaves. Very long-lived, it slowly forms clumps. Any reasonable soil, including seasonally dry ones; full sun. SEASON Late summer to winter. H 1m, S 1m.

89 ***STACHYS OFFICINALIS* 'HUMMELO'**

Purple heads emerge from dense clumps of leaves. A compact habit makes it useful for later summer combinations. Good winter seedheads. Slowly clump-forming. Any reasonable soil in sun or light shade. SEASON Mid-late summer. H 60cm, S 40cm.

90 ***VERONICASTRUM VIRGINICUM* F. *ROSEUM***

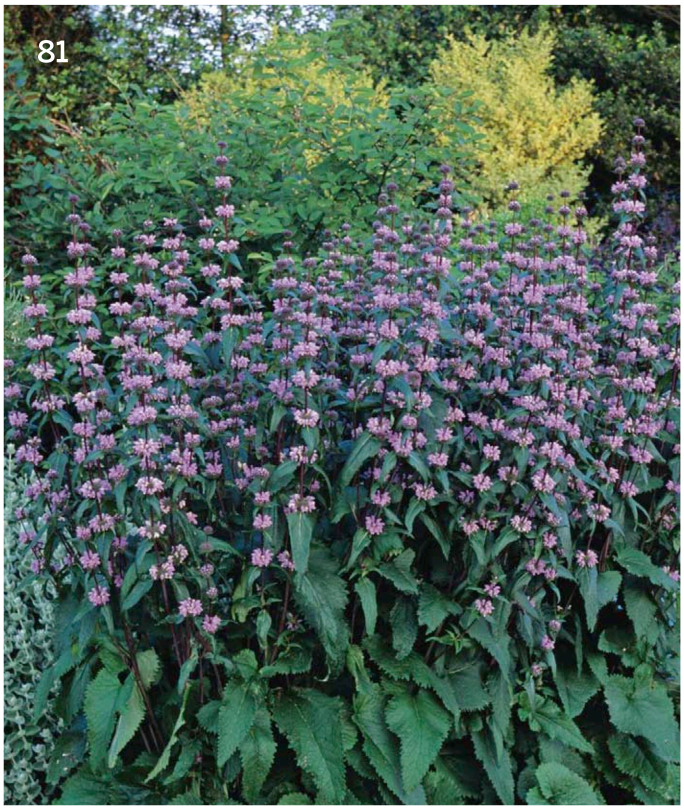
This species has spires of pink flowers on dark stems arranged in candelabra fashion. Very slowly forms a long-lived clump. Any fertile soil; sun. SEASON Early summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.7m, S 60cm.

91 ***SESLERIA AUTUMNALIS***

The pale creamy flowers appear in early summer. Its evergreen foliage is very effective in low plantings or at the front of taller ones or as a matrix for other plants. Sun and any reasonable soil, even poor and very alkaline. SEASON June to October. H 25cm, S 30cm.

92 ***VERATRUM NIGRUM***

Broad leaves with a unique pleated pattern on an upright stem with mysterious tiny dark brown or even black flowers on branching stems. It has a solid presence, invaluable as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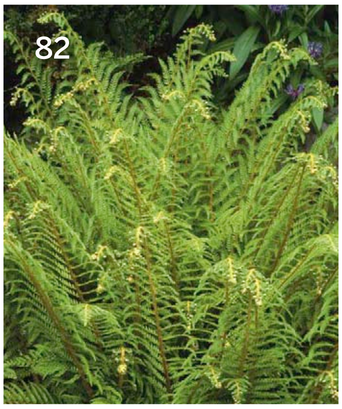
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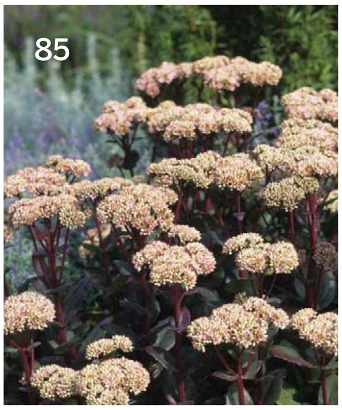
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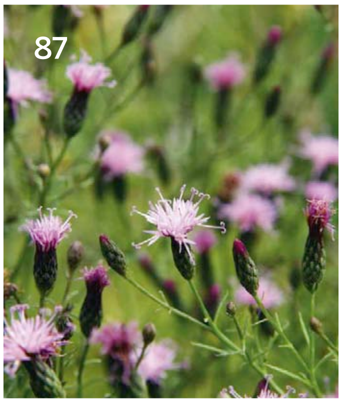
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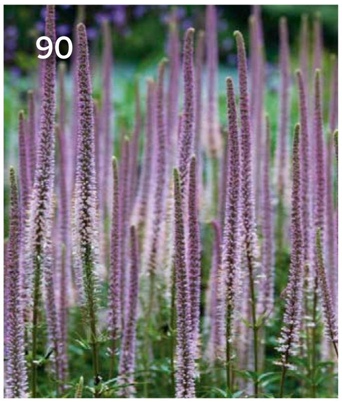
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81 ANDREW LAWSON / THE GARDEN COLLECTION. 82 JONATHAN BUCKLEY / THE GARDEN COLLECTION. 85 ANDREW LAWSON / THE GARDEN COLLECTION. 87 MARTIN HUGHES-JONES / GAP PHOTOS. 90 TIM GAINEY / ALAMY

other perennials crumble. Very long-lived but also very slow-growing. Fertile, moist but well-drained soils in full sun or light shade. SEASON Early to mid summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.2m, S 40cm. AGM*

Bulbs

Bulbs create interest in spring before most perennials are in acive growth.

93 *ALLIUM* 'SUMMER BEAUTY'

A useful plant for lower-level plantings or at the front of taller ones, as it forms a neat mat of linear foliage and sprouts round heads of pale lilac. Lasts and looks good all season. Slowly clump-forming, most soils; sun. SEASON Mid summer. H 40cm, S 40cm.

94 *CAMASSIA LEICHTLINII* SUBSP. *LEICHTLINII*

This bulb flowers alongside the earliest-blooming perennials. Its clear blue colour looks particularly good with pale greens. Spreads slowly. Does well in any reasonable soil, but best in moist fertile ones; sun. SEASON Late spring to early summer. HR RHS H3-H4, USDA 8b-10a. H 0.9m, S 0.2m. AGM*

95 *CROCUS TOMMASINIANUS*

Crocuses provide colour at a time when there is little else of interest, and have the advantage that their early growth allows them to be grown in intimate association with perennials. This one is a rich purple and vigorous, naturalising readily. Any reasonable soil in sun or deciduous shade. SEASON Late winter to early spring. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 15cm, S 6cm. AGM*

96 *ERANTHIS HYEMALIS*

Eranthis spread strongly when happy and provide sheets of golden-yellow, bowl-shaped flowers. The lush, lobed foliage can cover the ground, which alarms some gardeners, but it is summer-dormant and does not compete with summer-flowering perennials. Any reasonable soil in sun or deciduous shade. SEASON Late winter to early spring. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 10cm, S 30cm. AGM*

97 *EREMURUS ROBUSTUS*

Imposing spires packed with thousands of flowers, best grown to tower above shorter perennials, and repeated at intervals. This species has very pale pink flowers. Long-lived but needs well-drained soil and maximum sunshine; avoid windy sites. SEASON Early summer. H 2.5m, S 80cm. AGM*

98 *NARCISSUS POETICUS*

A classic daffodil with pure white flowers and a shallow orange central cup. Very robust, building up into substantial clumps in time. Fertile soils, average or moist, some tolerance of winter waterlogging. SEASON Late spring. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 0.5m, S 0.2m.

99 *NECTAROSCORDUM SICULUM*

Tall stems with unusual pale pink-fawn flowers that begin as upright buds then hang downwards. Stylish, it needs planting where it is not overwhelmed by more colourful plants. Long-lived, flowers reliably and often self-seeds. SEASON early summer. HR RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a. H 1.2m, S 0.3m. AGM*

100 *TULIPA* 'LADY JANE'

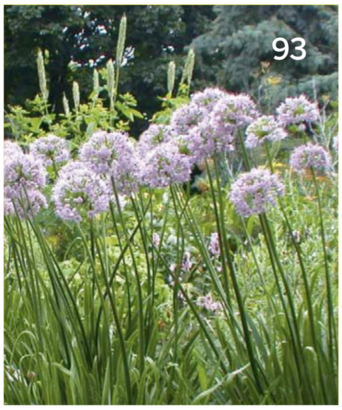
Graceful, pointed flowers, creamy white on the inside and dull pinky-red out – looking rather like magnolias and very superior. Fertile well-drained soil with good summer sun to 'bake' the dormant bulbs. SEASON Mid spring. H 20cm, S 15cm. AGM*

Reader offer

To buy a selection of Piet Oudolf's favourite plants at a 10% discount from the Beth Chatto Nursery, please **turn to page 112**.

Piet Oudolf

Piet Oudolf is speaking alongside designer Jinny Blom at this year's GARDENS ILLUSTRATED lecture on Tuesday 21 May 2013. For details, please **turn to page 8**. Alternatively you could visit Piet's garden as part of our reader holiday to the Northern Dutch provinces. **Details on page 26**. To see examples of his planting and design work visit **www.oudolf.com**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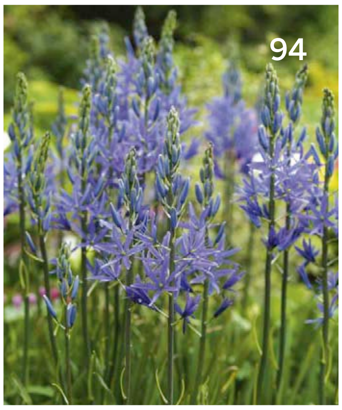
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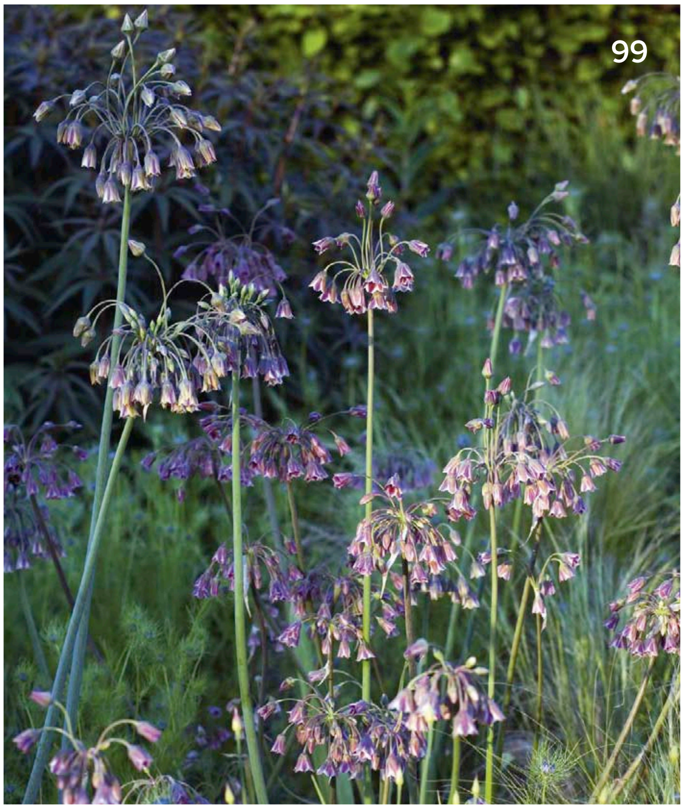
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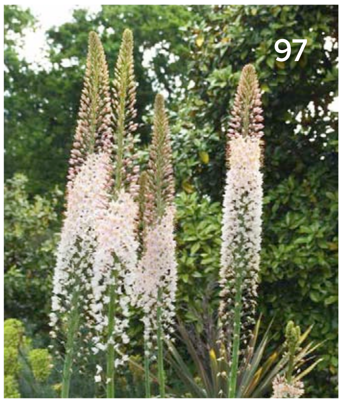
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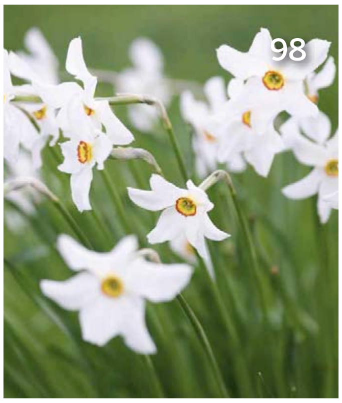
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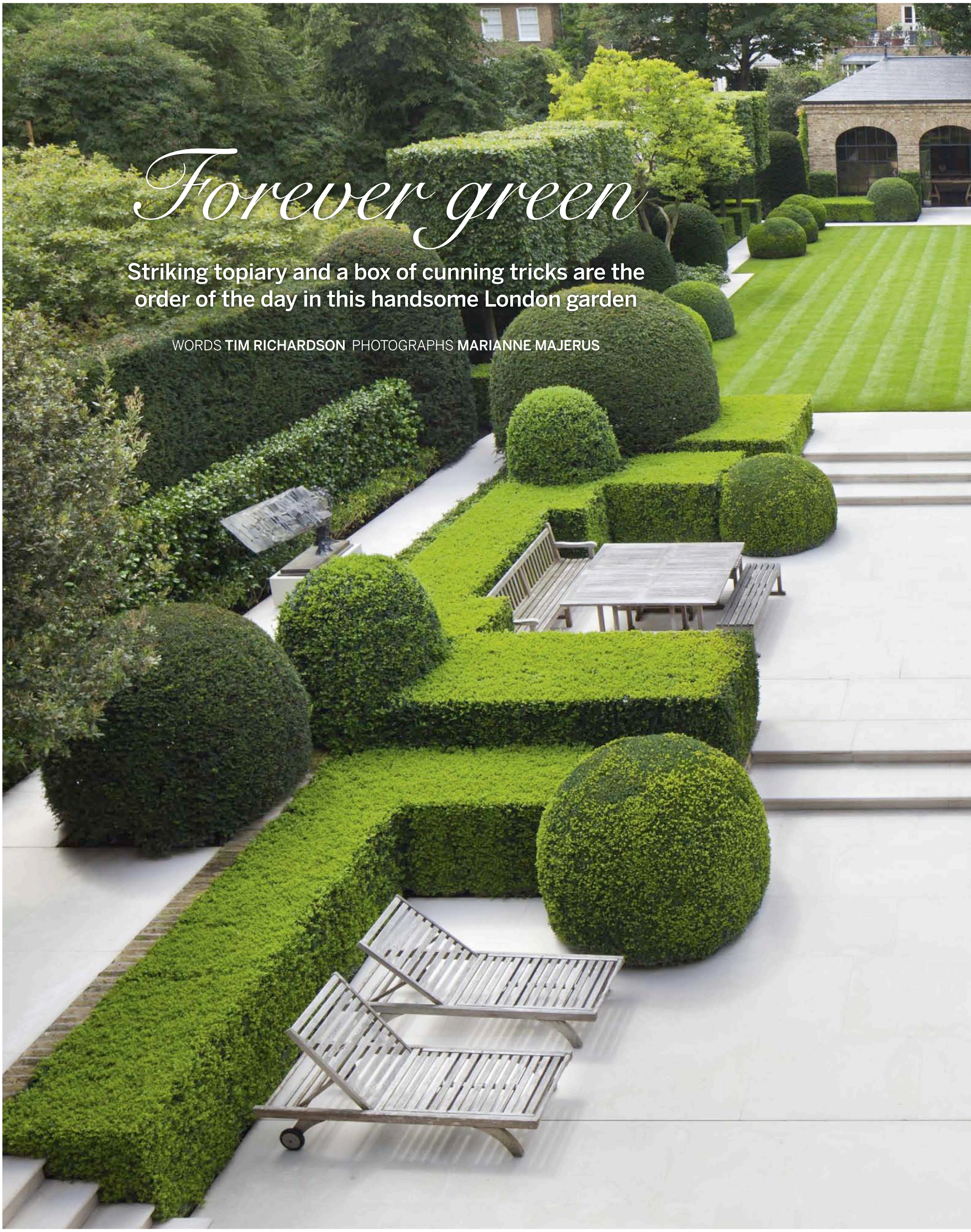
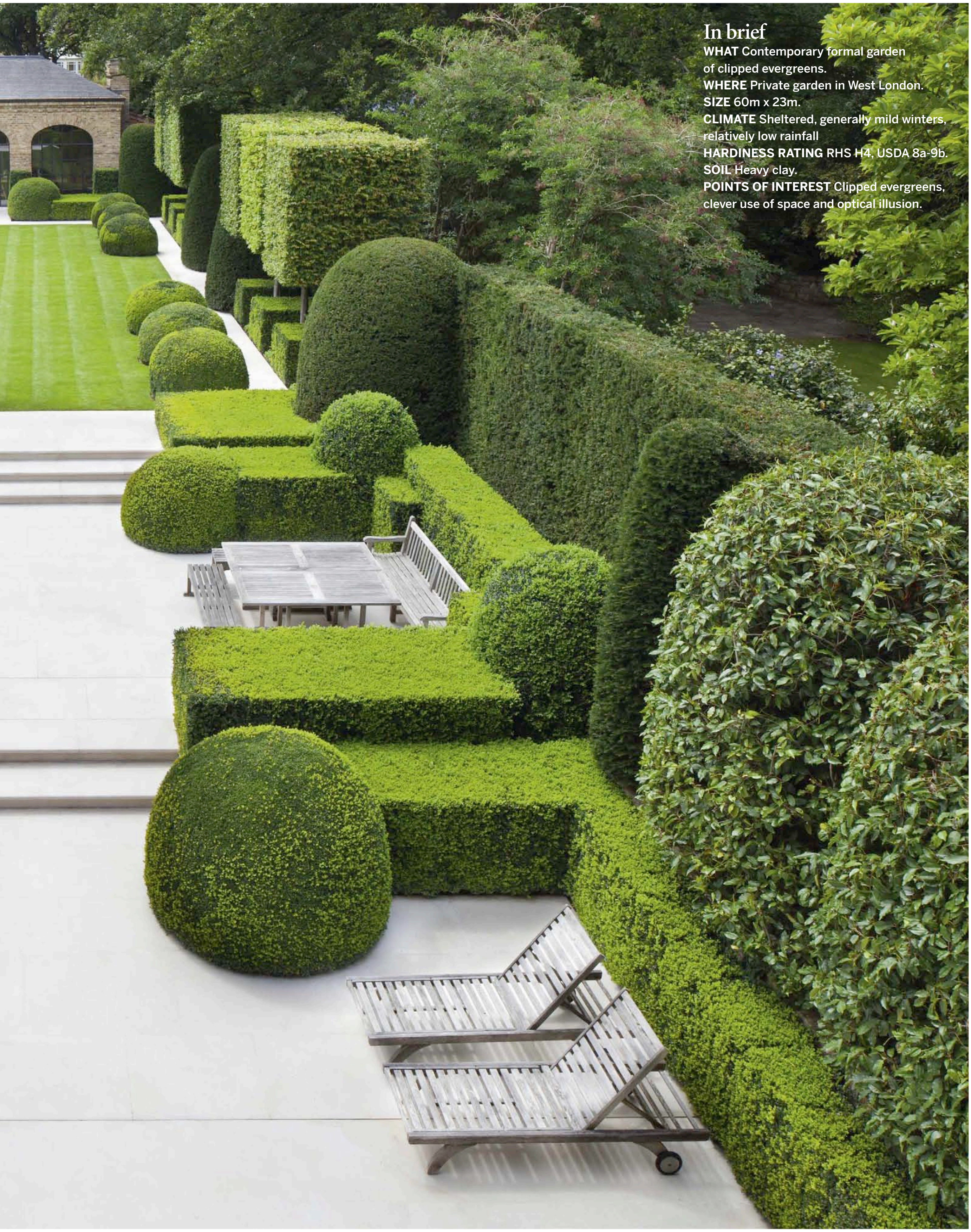
93 PIET OUDOLF. 94 NICOLA STOCKEN TOMKINS / THE GARDEN COLLECTION. 97 ANDREA JONES / GARDEN WORLD IMAGES. 98 DIANNA JAZWINSKI / GAP PHOTOS. 99 STEVEN WOOSTER / THE GARDEN COLLECTION



Forever green

Striking topiary and a box of cunning tricks are the order of the day in this handsome London garden

WORDS **TIM RICHARDSON** PHOTOGRAPHS **MARIANNE MAJERUS**



In brief

WHAT Contemporary formal garden of clipped evergreens.

WHERE Private garden in West London.

SIZE 60m x 23m.

CLIMATE Sheltered, generally mild winters, relatively low rainfall

HARDINESS RATING RHS H4, USDA 8a-9b.

SOIL Heavy clay.

POINTS OF INTEREST Clipped evergreens, clever use of space and optical illusion.

Sometimes a front garden acts as a declaration of intent. This super-cool formal arrangement of clipped hedges is set amid the wide and leafy streets of central/west London, where neighbouring gardens tend to be more romantically inclined. There are no flowers – everything is clipped and shaped to perfection. It's a little piece of Parisian chic in the midst of old Albion, created by French owners working in tandem with Tommaso del Buono (Italian) and Paul Gazerwitz (American), a design duo who work out of an office in Spitalfields, East London.

The rigorous design of the front garden, slightly raised on a platform of Portland stone, is based on three 'stripes' of clipped box, with six large box balls between them flanking the central pathway. "I have a thing about stripes – stripy fabrics and so on," Tommaso explains. Four cube-clipped evergreen oaks (*Quercus ilex*) stand sentry against the front perimeter, panelled with dark yew, while an existing *Magnolia* x *soulangeana* 'Alba Superba' has been left in situ. The tree pleasingly disrupts the severity of the grid, and in spring its almost phosphorescently white, goblet-like flowers light up the scene.

It's a chic garden which does not hide away shyly, but turns heads. According to Tommaso, it's not unknown for well-heeled ladies to drive up, jump out of their car, take photographs of the front garden through the bars of the gate, jump back in the car and then speed off again – even if there are people in the garden at the time. One nice detail these raiders will miss is the way clipped box balls have been used to create a 'bubbling cauldron' effect outside the windows at basement level. As Tommaso observes, "It's like you are on a ship, with these billowing forms outside."

The scale of the west-facing rear garden – 60 metres in length – comes as a shock: it's considerably larger than the norm in this part of London. A few years ago a large plot of land came up for sale at the foot of the garden, with planning permission to build a new house. The owners clubbed together with their neighbours on either side to buy it, so that instead of gaining a new neighbour, they each acquired a new chunk of garden.

Tommaso and Paul's clients originally envisaged an underground swimming pool, but soon shelved this idea as impractical. Instead, a low three-arched pavilion, with something of the character of an orangery or lemonia, was constructed at the end of the space – the interior consists of a dining room above and a spa below. More importantly for the garden designers, this building has a modest presence, looking as if has been there for many decades.

The garden is divided into three main sections: a panel of striped lawn in front of the pavilion at the far end and two terraces of Portuguese limestone ascending from the house. The soul of the garden is the use of large, almost outsized clipped evergreens – chiefly yew, box and hornbeam – to create various tableaux of subtle shades of green deployed in strongly shaped blocks. The

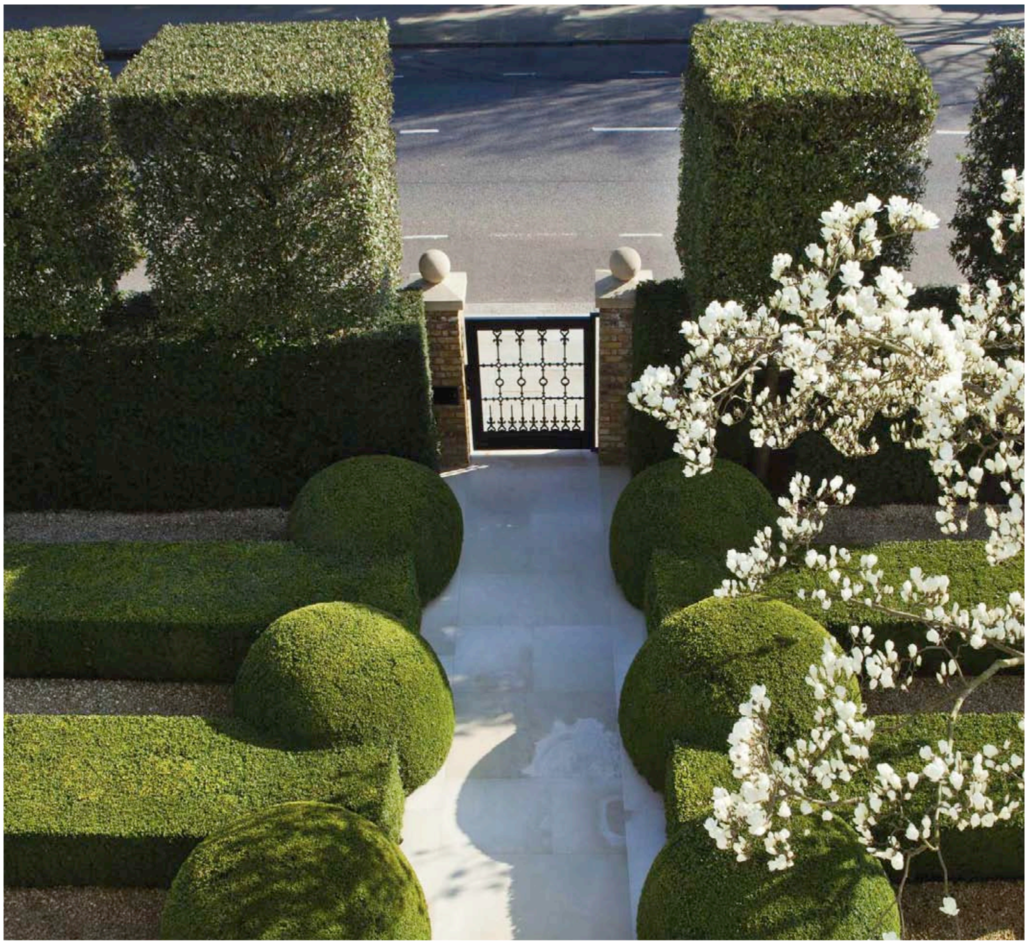
▷

Top left The strong geometry of the design is leavened by variations in the colour and texture of the evergreens, such as the grey green *Quercus ilex* in the background.

Top right The chic front garden is dominated by box stripes and balls, lightened in spring by magnolia blossom.

Bottom left The dining pavilion at the far end of the garden has the character of an Italian limonaia, with its large arched windows, framing a view of the house.

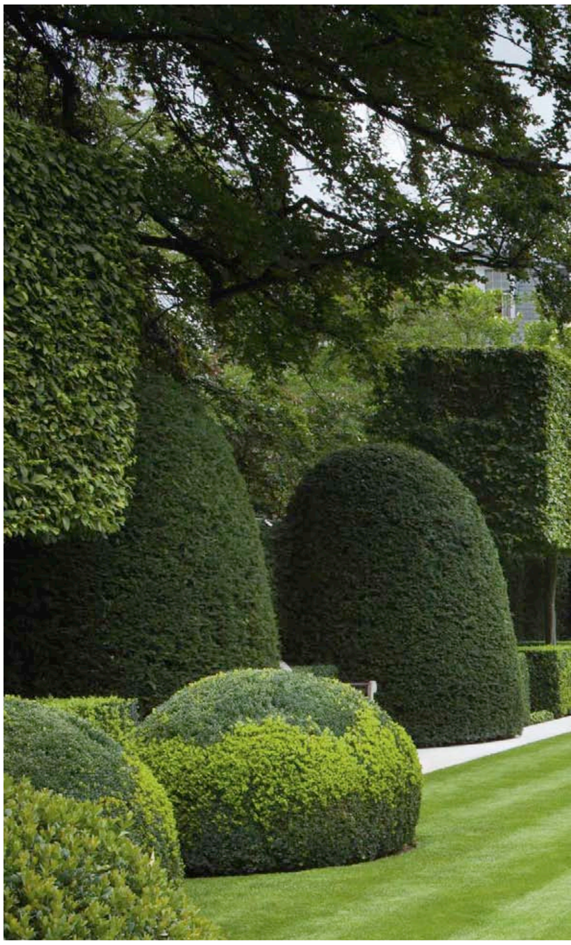
Bottom right Cross vistas create the surreal effect of a de Chirico painting.



Top The lengthening of the garden allowed for the creation of a formal garden in scale with the house's four-storey elevation.

Bottom left A classic Lutyens bench in one of the garden's intimate niches reminds us we are in London, not Paris.

Bottom right The interplay of cubes, domes, balls and walls made of living plants is the chief pleasure of the garden.



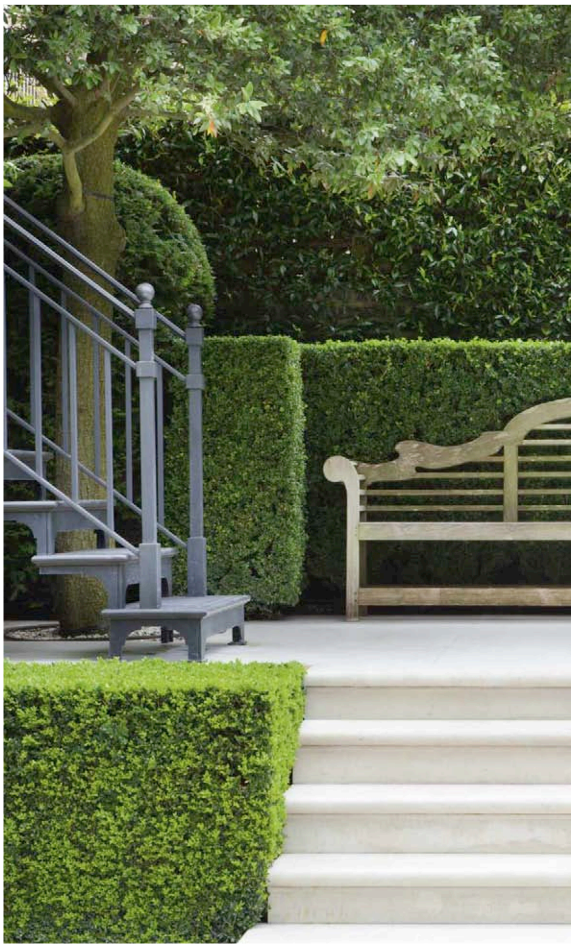
▷ basic interplay is between the rounded forms of the box balls and the cuboid shapes of yew, hornbeam and box.

Tommaso says the use of particularly large clipped forms was a deliberate ploy. "It's a big house for London – four storeys. The scale makes the garden appear handsome, not twee." The large scale of the topiary also enhances the foreshortening effect of the garden's proportions – an optical illusion that makes it appear smaller and therefore more intimate and approachable.

Large ready-grown topiaries of this quality are not easy to find. Tommaso recounts with some glee how he travelled across Europe with his client to nurseries in Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and Italy, on the lookout for exactly the right specimens. The result cannot be faulted, with six fine clipped hornbeam trees flanking the space, lending lightness as well as definition, and a series of truly magnificent clipped box balls kept in a permanent state of perfection by gardener Oscar Fernandez.

There is one moment of floral colour, when the *Magnolia soulangeana* halfway down the garden comes into bloom, its pinky white blossoms complementing those of a larger specimen in next door's garden, as well as echoing the white form in the front garden. Another telling detail is the placement of two specimen *Quercus ilex* trees by the terrace next to the house – not clipped as cubes this time, but elegant plumes.

As Tommaso says: "It's all very regular – but not quite." Despite its rigorous appearance, key elements of the garden do not quite line up. The pavilion is not on a central axis with the house, for example. And the differing growth of the box and other plants makes for variations in scale. But these 'mistakes' are all deliberate. "It doesn't worry me at all," Tommaso says. "This is a garden – the discrepancies just add to the charm!" □



Plants for form and structure

The key structural plants in this garden are box, yew, hornbeam and evergreen oak. An impression of great variation can be created from a limited palette.

Box is the most popular subject for topiary. The dense foliage makes it ideal for clipped shapes.

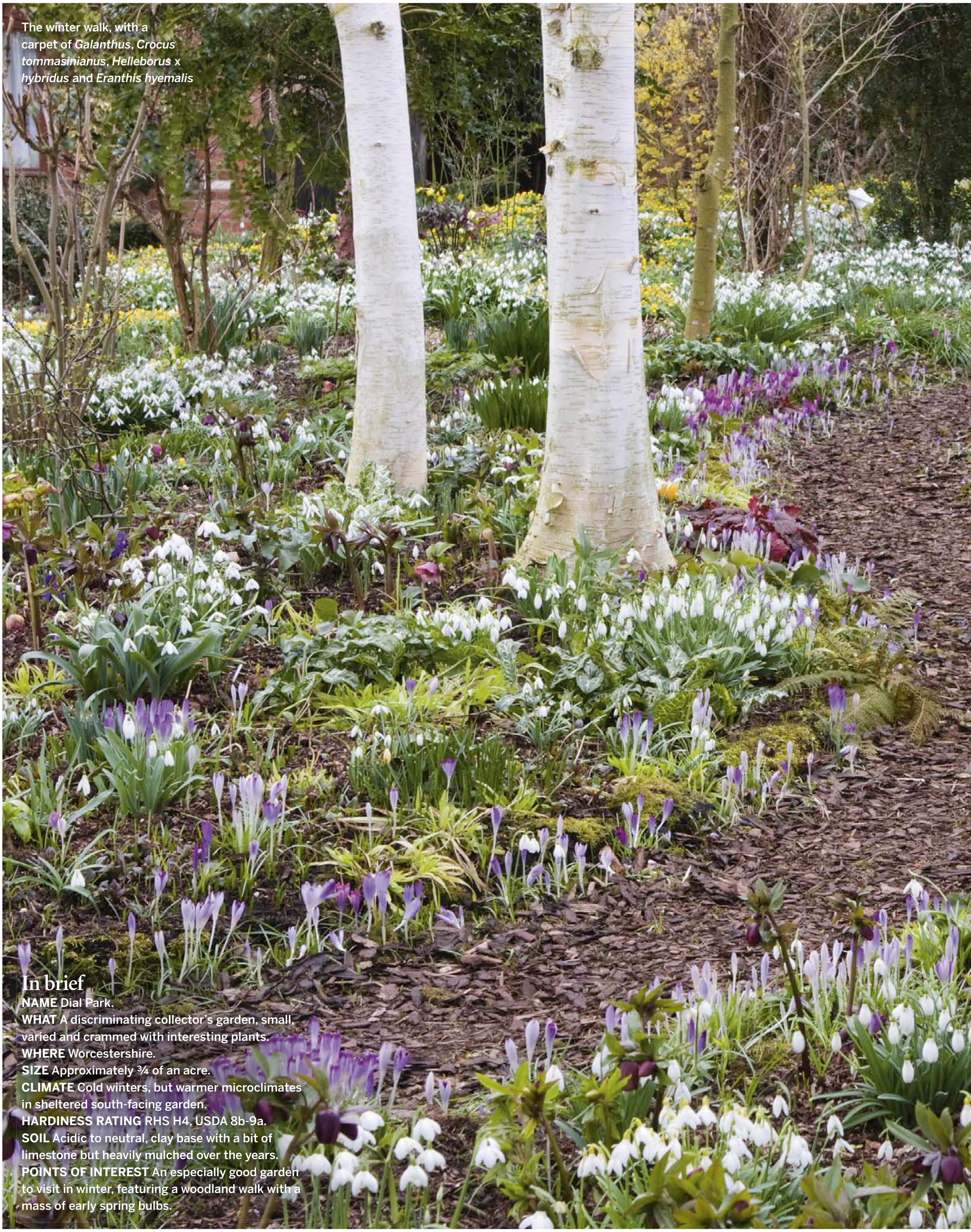
Yew's dark foliage tends to work best as a hedge or large topiary subject. It is notoriously slow-growing but good for larger topiaries, such as pyramids and cones.

Hornbeam is a deciduous tree but can almost be treated as an evergreen, in that it holds on to its dead leaves over winter. It is best used as a pleached tree, or cut into cube forms.

The evergreen oak (*Quercus ilex*) can be topiarised into simple shapes to good effect.

Maintenance

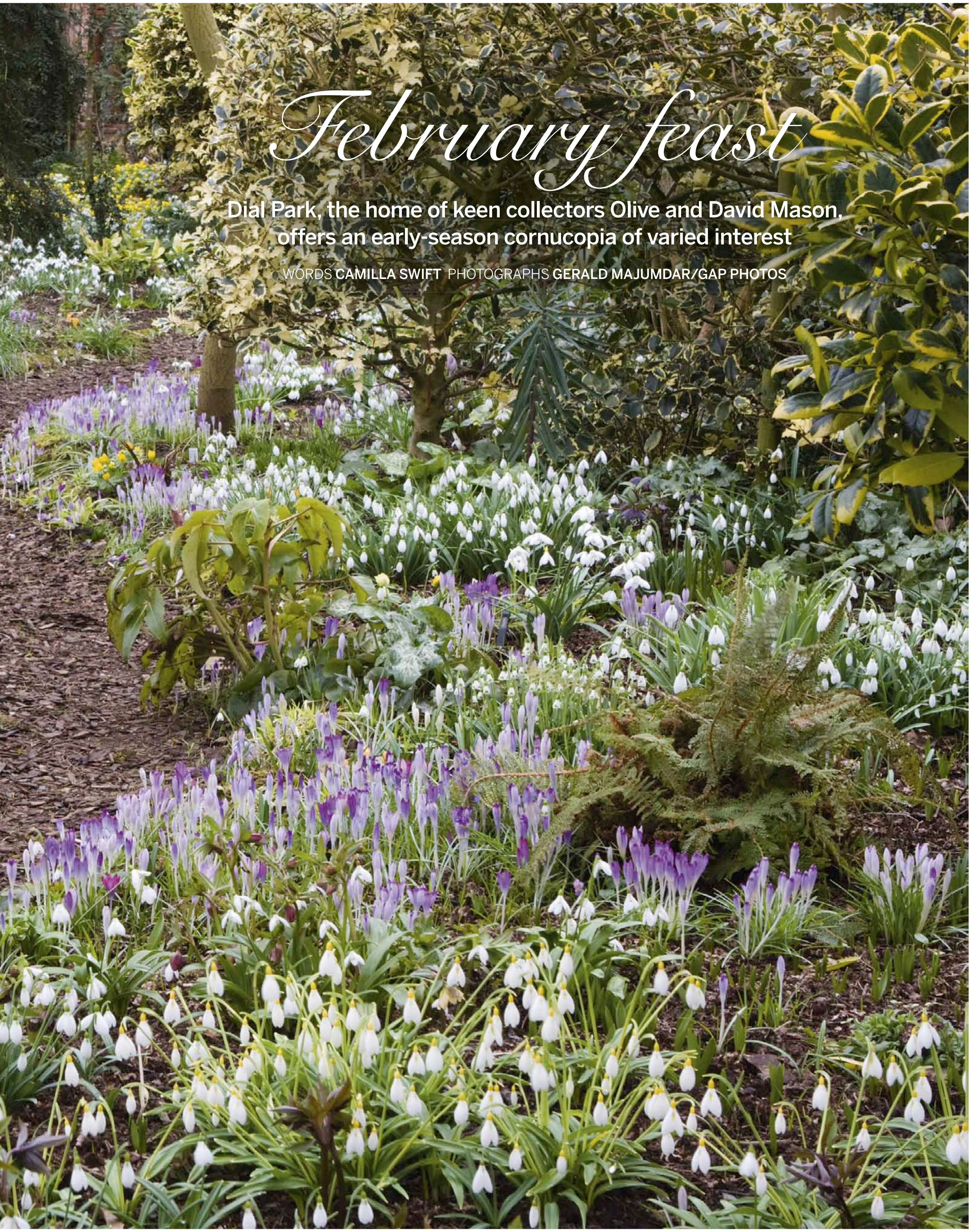
Gardener Oscar Fernandez comes to this garden one full day a week, more often in summer. The box is clipped three or four times over the summer. The hornbeam is clipped twice a year, and the *Quercus ilex* once. Oscar does all this work by hand, deploying electric shears only for the smooth tops of the hornbeams, which he shapes at an angle so that they look level from the upper windows of the house. A scaffold is used for the hornbeam and a ladder for the oaks.



The winter walk, with a carpet of *Galanthus*, *Crocus tommasinianus*, *Helleborus* x *hybridus* and *Eranthis hyemalis*

In brief

NAME Dial Park.
WHAT A discriminating collector's garden, small, varied and crammed with interesting plants.
WHERE Worcestershire.
SIZE Approximately ¾ of an acre.
CLIMATE Cold winters, but warmer microclimates in sheltered south-facing garden.
HARDINESS RATING RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a.
SOIL Acidic to neutral, clay base with a bit of limestone but heavily mulched over the years.
POINTS OF INTEREST An especially good garden to visit in winter, featuring a woodland walk with a mass of early spring bulbs.



February feast

Dial Park, the home of keen collectors Olive and David Mason, offers an early-season cornucopia of varied interest

WORDS **CAMILLA SWIFT** PHOTOGRAPHS **GERALD MAJUMDAR/GAP PHOTOS**

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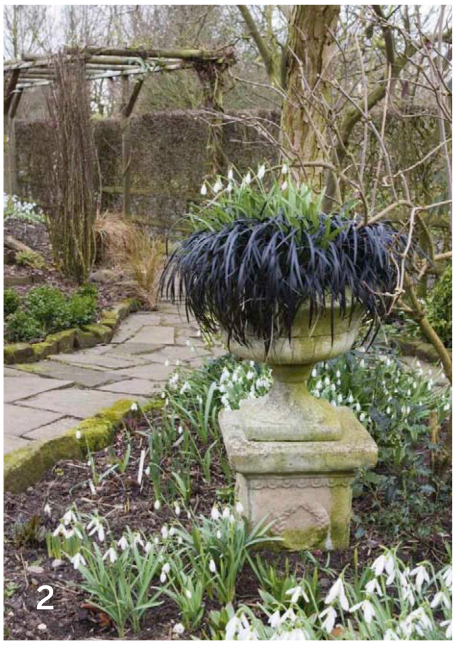
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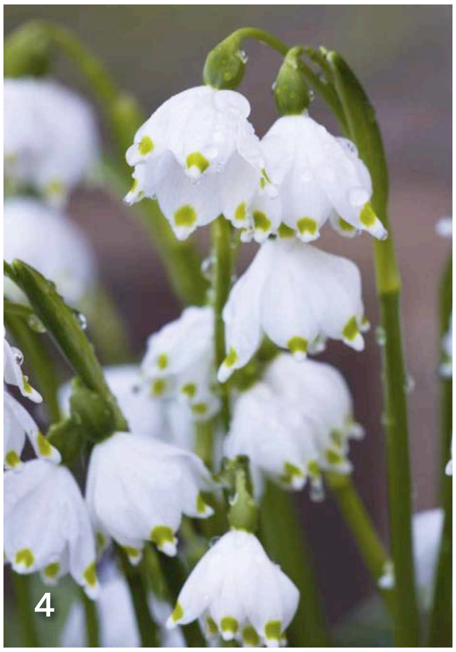
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Olive's knowledge and passion are indefatigable; her work ethic breathtaking

When David Mason discovered a man lying prone on his garden path, this was not, as he feared, a fatality, but a dedicated galanthophile closing in on the particular object of his desire. Galanthophiles, or snowdrop fanciers, are a passionate breed. They come from all over the world to prostrate themselves in cold, wet English gardens during February. Like horticultural trainspotters, galanthophiles combine a passion for collecting with a delight in detail. If there is a fashion in plants, then the snowdrop is currently up there with Alexander McQueen. What the tulip was to the 17th century, so the snowdrop is in the 21st. Fisticuffs, it's said, break out over the sales tables at snowdrop galas. And last year a single bulb went for £725 on the auction website eBay.

If like me, you think all snowdrops look the same, arm yourself with the galanthophile's friend – a walking stick with a mirror attached to the bottom – and spend time at Dial Park with Olive and David Mason in a garden bursting not just with snowdrops but with an astonishing variety of early spring bulbs. Olive's knowledge and passion are indefatigable; her work ethic breathtaking. The garden, started from scratch 20 years ago, is small but there's not an inch of wasted space.

"This is where I began," she says, pointing to a miniature woodland walk, where, overshadowed by a large walnut tree, a narrow path meanders through an eclectic cluster of trees and shrubs. Here, the polished mahogany bark of a *Prunus serrulata* contrasts nicely with two gleaming white birch, *Betula utilis*, whose brightness is maintained with some gentle scrubbing by Olive, and the sharp spicy scent of *Hamamelis* x *intermedia* 'Arnold Promise' will be succeeded soon by whiffs of vanilla from *Azara microphylla* . Underneath stretches an opulent white and gold tapestry of winter aconites and snowdrops, punctured by lavender spears of *Crocus tommasinianus*, and splashed with plum coloured hellebores and bright green polypodiums. Cardamine and wood anemone follow the snowdrops, then lilies, trillium and the cobra-headed *Arisaema*, and finally bullet points of bright red *Tulipa sprengeri*. Because of the shade, this bed sleeps through the summer, waking again with cyclamen in autumn. Olive's love of gardening came from her parents: her mother "plopped plants in anywhere", her father liked things in straight rows. "It nearly broke up their marriage."

A self-confessed "compulsive collector" of plants, snowdrops are what Olive loves best, a passion she inherited from a maiden aunt. She started with the common snowdrop, *Galanthus nivalis* and a robust *G. plicatus* found by her daughter on a farm nearby. Her snowdrop season can now extend from September right though to March. "I don't get so much pleasure from the earlies," says Olive, "they don't seem quite right with dahlias, somehow." But she also loves old daffodils, and *Anemone nemorosa*, primroses, and ferns. Her latest passion, and the glimmering of a new

Continued on page 58 ▷

1 The garden viewed from the woodland walk over the main lawn to the pagoda.

2 Vivid green leaves of *Galanthus* contrast well with the black grass *Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Nigrescens'.

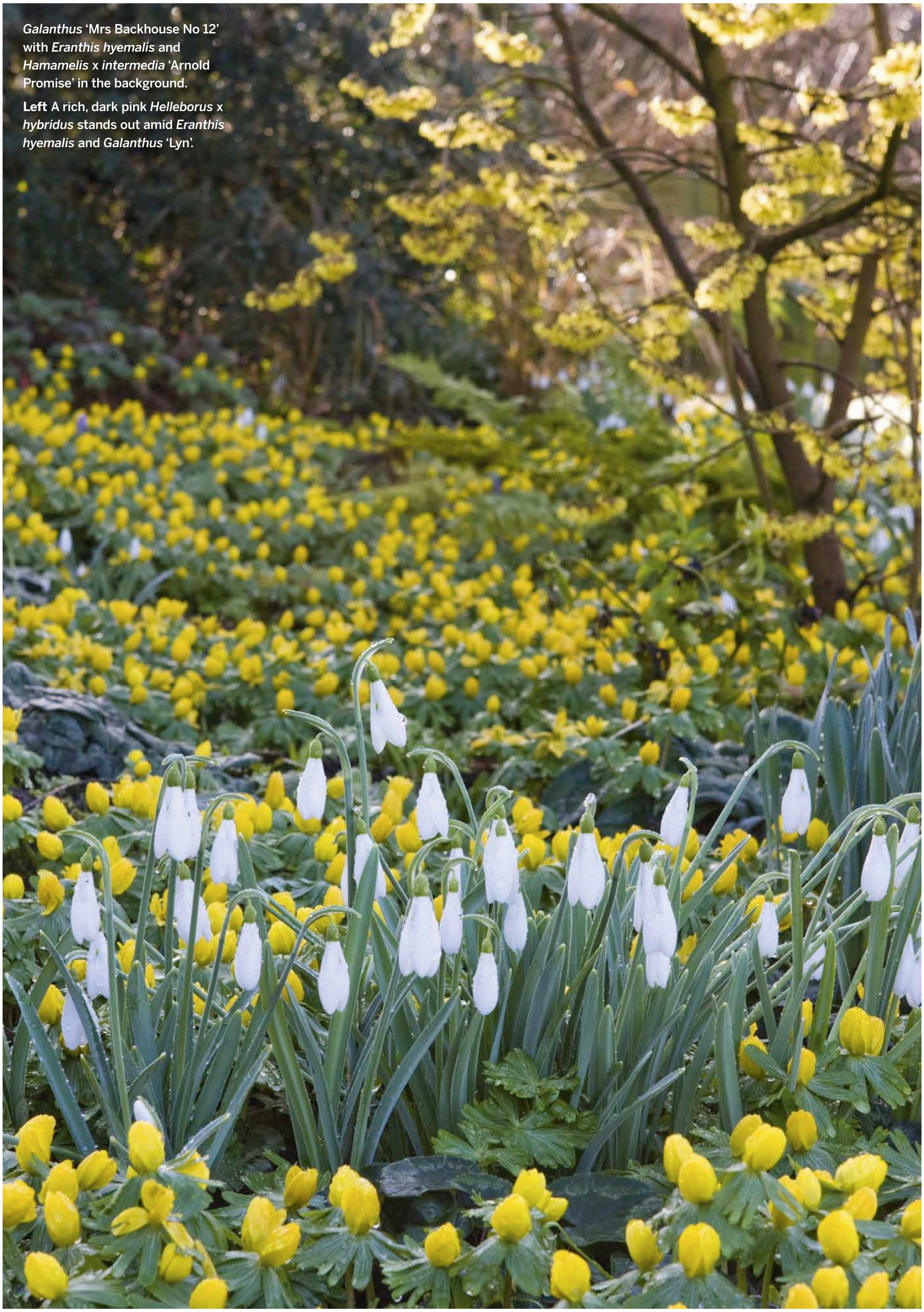
3 *Iris histrioides* 'Lady Beatrix Stanley'.

4 The snowflake *Leucojum vernum* var. *vagnerii*.

5 *Scoliopus bigelowii* requires humus-rich soil.

6 A *Buxus* snake meanders through the box-edged parterre.

7 View back from the lawn to the woodland walk.



Galanthus 'Mrs Backhouse No 12' with *Eranthis hyemalis* and *Hamamelis* x *intermedia* 'Arnold Promise' in the background.

Left A rich, dark pink *Helleborus* x *hybridus* stands out amid *Eranthis hyemalis* and *Galanthus* 'Lyn'.

The driveway is lined with spring flowers giving you a hint of the further delights to found in the woodland walk.

▷ collection, is *Eranthis hyemalis*, the winter aconite. "There's some nice different coloured ones coming in from the continent; my German galanthophiles bring them for me." I noticed she'd planted them in a thick line down the middle of her drive, and hoped I hadn't run them over. "It's an idea I borrowed from John Sales, [former chief gardens advisor to the National Trust] so they should run exactly between the wheels of a car. Anyway they're very tough," she says.

Olive is an instinctive gardener. She has never tested her soil. She's always carrying pots around her garden searching for the right spot, eventually planting things where she thinks they will want to grow, sometimes in two or three different places, just to be safe. Her "specials" she sinks in water lily pots to stop them from scattering. But she's mad for self-seeding. She has produced her own snowdrop 'Aunt Agnes', named after an inspirational family member but, she says, "I didn't deliberately breed it – the bees did it for me". She divides her snowdrops in August, constantly alert to pests and diseases – swift moth is currently enemy number one – and feeds all her bulbs in autumn with bone meal and potash before covering them with a thick layer of last year's leaf mould, which she stores in black bin-liners.

David wields the mower, but Olive manages the rest of the garden single-handed. "There is no point getting help," she says, "I'm the only one who knows where everything is. I just have to keep on top." And long may she do so, for at Dial Park, even on a bleak winter's day, there's a promise of spring. □

FURTHER INFORMATION

Address Dial Park, Chaddesley Corbett, Worcestershire DY10 4QB.

Opening Times For the NGS: Wednesday 13 February, 2013. Admission 11am-4pm or by appointment, throughout the year.

Contact David and Olive Mason.

Tel 01562 777451.

Web www.ngs.org.uk

3 Favourite spring bulb suppliers:

Avon Bulbs www.avonbulbs.co.uk comes top of the list of Olive's favourite bulb growers, followed closely by **Miniature Bulbs** www.miniaturebulbs.co.uk "Both sell first-class bulbs and are friendly and helpful." She also likes **Croft 16** www.croft-16daffodils.co.uk who specialise in the historic daffodil varieties she loves.

8 of Olive's favourite plants

1 ***Galanthus* 'Aunt Agnes'**
Grown by Olive herself from seed, a slightly larger version of *G. plicatus* 'Trym'. Named in honour of the aunt who got her hooked on snowdrops.

2 ***Eranthis hyemalis***
A new collection: "They are perfect companions to snowdrops. I love their cheery brightness and open faces and the way they curl up when its cold. A bit like us."

3 ***Crocus tommasinianus***
Rampant self-seeder with lilac-silvery flowers loved by the bees, this is one of the first crocuses to bloom, sometimes as early as late January.

4 **Scented winter shrubs**
The scarlet and spicy scented *Hamamelis* x *intermedia* 'Arnold Promise' and *Azara microphylla*, a slow-growing, evergreen, South American shrub with glossy, oval serrated leaves, an intriguing herringbone arrangement of branches and sweet-scented flowers.

5 ***Narcissus* 'Bowles's Early Sulphur'**
One of Olive's favourite daffodils . It comes early and because it is small it associates well with snowdrops. She loves it for its pale colouring and "because it commemorates that great gardener EA Bowles".

6 ***Daphne bholua* 'Jacqueline Postill'**
Evergreen with intensely fragrant flowers, which are pink to purple on the outside with a white or pale pink centre.

7 **Ferns**
Another collection. Olive loves how well *Polypodium* works with snowdrops but her particular favourite is *Polypodium cambricum* 'Richard Kayse', which fills a small fernery behind the house, where she retreats in high summer.

8 **Dwarf irises**
Particularly *Iris* 'Sheila Ann Germaney'. A fine new hybrid from the same parentage as 'Katharine Hodgkin' and just as vigorous but with sky blue flowers and a rich yellow stripe on the petals.

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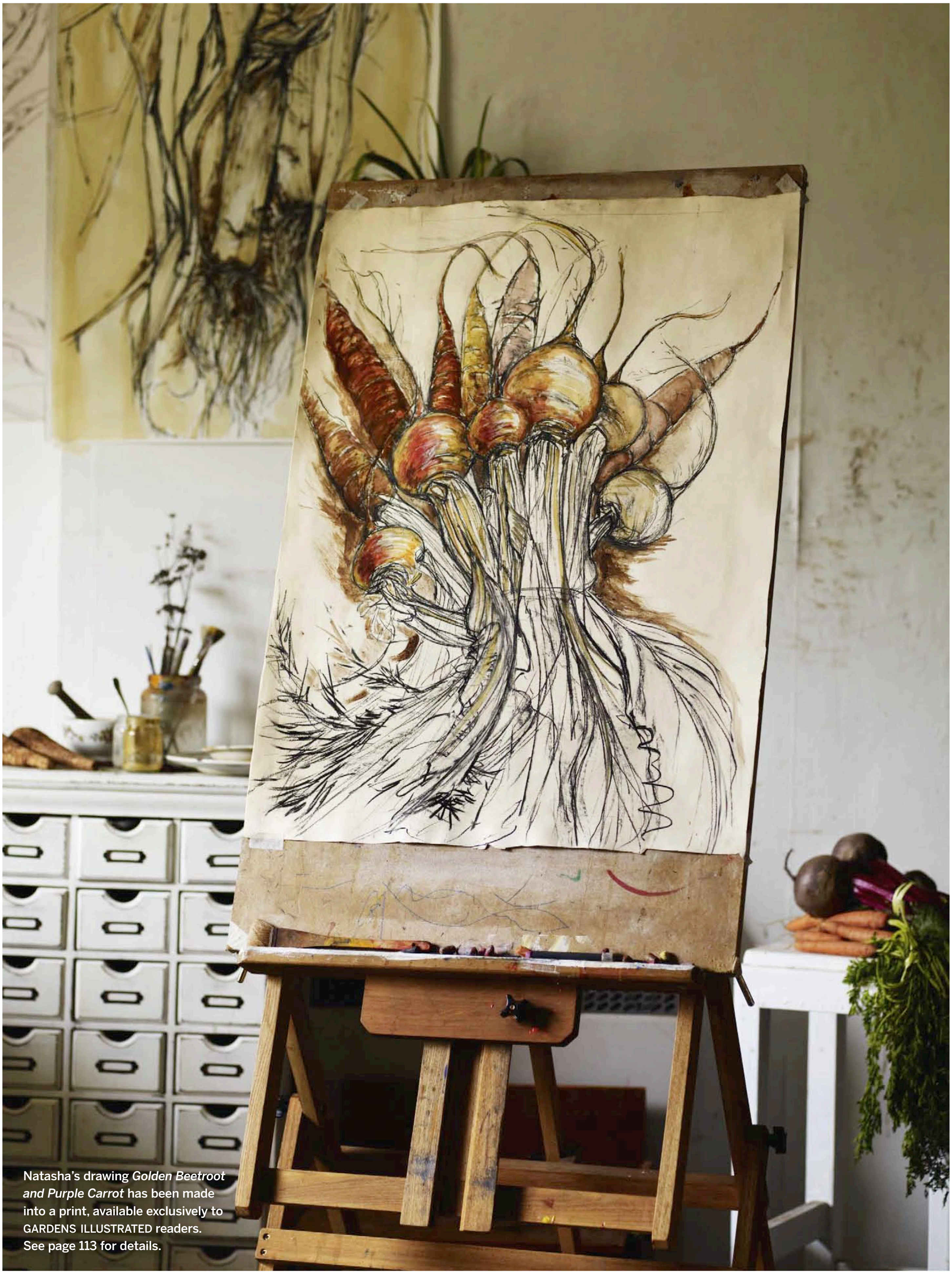
Earthy delights

From her cottage in rural Somerset, Natasha Clutterbuck uses free-flowing charcoal lines and natural pigments to give her vegetable sketches a sense of vitality

WORDS **SORREL EVERTON** PHOTOGRAPHS **ANDREW MONTGOMERY**



Natasha's drawing *Golden Beetroot and Purple Carrot* has been made into a print, available exclusively to GARDENS ILLUSTRATED readers. See page 113 for details.

"I like the directness and rawness of drawing. There's an honesty to it"

In the midst of Somerset in the village of Stanton Drew, famed for its Neolithic standing stone circle, artist Natasha Clutterbuck returns home arms full of vegetables; carrots with their leafy tops, fat leeks, architectural sprout trees and strings of onions. This locally grown and often freshly harvested produce will make it to the kitchen – but all in good time. First of all she takes them to her studio and sets the vegetables out around the tables and shelves. "I got this," she says pointing to a huge plump orange pumpkin, "from a local agricultural show. It won second prize for the largest pumpkin. Now it's one of my prize models."

Having studied ceramics at the University of the West of England, Natasha started out creating a range of pieces with an earthy, tactile appeal to them. Decorated with flowers and leaves, it was the shape or the nature of the plant itself that dictated the form of the piece.

However, it was after a stint teaching art to friends and neighbours in the local village hall – encouraging a spontaneous artistic response to objects – that she returned to drawing and sketching. "I like the directness and rawness of drawing. There's an honesty to it." At the same time, the village was working hard on their newly established allotments and Natasha would often find proudly grown gifts left on her doorstep such as carrots, beetroot, bunches of flowers and gourds. "My immediate reaction was that I wanted to draw them."

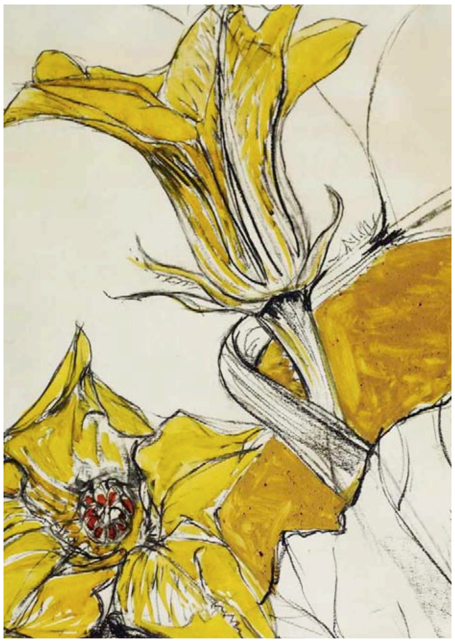
The earthiness evident in Natasha's ceramics can be seen in her drawings. Working large-scale, often on tea-stained art paper to give a warm, almost antiqued feel, she draws mainly in charcoal using quick lines, sometimes thin, sometime really dense – "Willow charcoal is wonderfully responsive" – to sketch her vegetable shapes. Then she might add colour. "I experimented with natural juices, beetroot for example, but a lot of those colours are fugitive [purple beetroot juice fades to blue], so now I try to recreate those tones using natural pigments and minerals. I often use the soil itself left clinging to the veg."

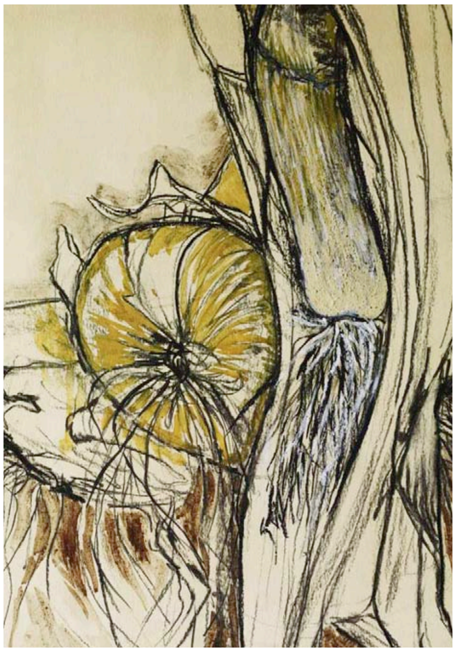
Three years ago a neighbour asked Natasha to display some of her art in the local pub and it was there that Sarah Mead of Yeo Valley (the family-run dairy company) spotted her work and commissioned her to paint a mural for their newly created 'HQ' in Somerset (home of Yeo Valley family farm and events centre). Working over four days on a specially constructed platform, Natasha created a huge pumpkin scene over four metres long. "I love the shapes of trailing leaves, the bright yellow trumpet flowers and the rounded orange pumpkins." It's a scene brought indoors from the farm's organic garden, where Natasha has spent time observing and drawing the vegetables and flowers she sees.

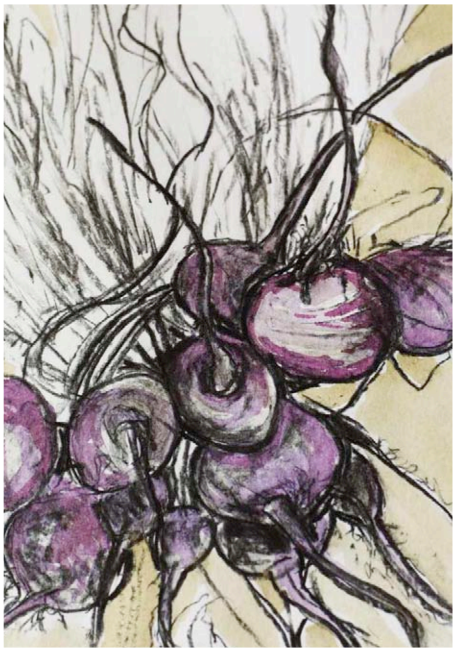
Back in her studio, Natasha has just finished a new, seasonally inspired image. "I've bunched together golden beetroot and purple carrots." The vegetables do indeed have that just-pulled appearance, reconnecting us with the process of growing, as well as of eating – which is where the vegetables go next. It's just as well that her husband (an award-winning hedge layer) and two small daughters don't mind the wait. □

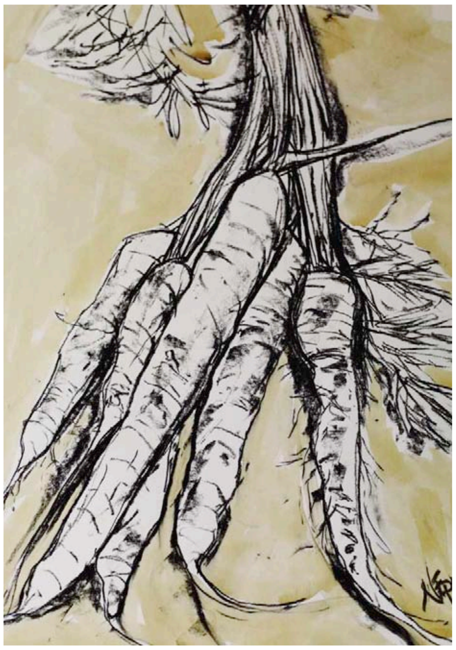
USEFUL INFORMATION

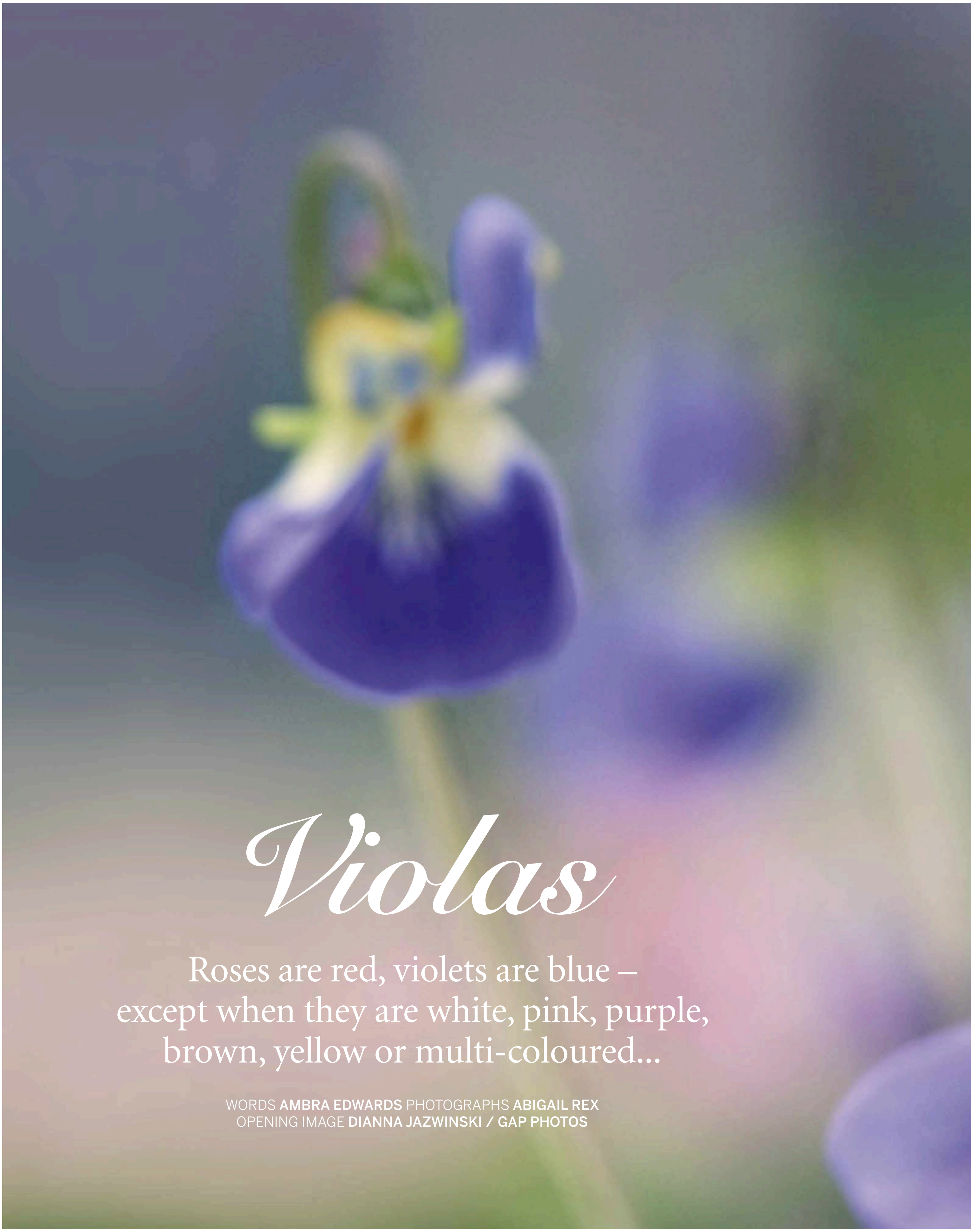
For more details on Natasha's work go to www.natashaclutterbuck.com or call 01275 331528. Natasha's picture *Golden Beetroot and Purple Carrot* is available to GARDENS ILLUSTRATED readers as an exclusive print. See page 113 for full details.











Violas

Roses are red, violets are blue –
except when they are white, pink, purple,
brown, yellow or multi-coloured...

WORDS **AMBRA EDWARDS** PHOTOGRAPHS **ABIGAIL REX**
OPENING IMAGE **DIANNA JAZWINSKI / GAP PHOTOS**

In brief

COMMON NAME Violets.

WHAT Genus of up to 500 species, mostly perennials but also including shrubs and succulents.

ORIGINS *Viola odorata* is our native sweet violet, also common in Europe. Most violets originate in the temperate northern hemisphere, but can also be found in South America and Australasia.

SEASON Late January to April.

SIZE 7-15cm tall.

HARDINESS RATING RHS H4, USDA 8b-9a.

CONDITIONS Moist, well-drained soil with winter sun and summer shade.

Pansies, violas, violets, violettas – where does one end and the other begin?

The definitions, confesses expert grower Clive Groves from Groves Nurseries, are fairly fuzzy, but generally you can think of pansies as the larger, showier flowers with faces, and violas as smaller flowers with striations in the centre, to guide pollinating insects towards the action.

'Violetta' is a vague term for small viola hybrids, but what Clive grows are definitely violets – small, delicate relatives of the shy, gorgeously scented flowers that once spangled our hedgerows and woodland edges in spring. The 138 *Viola odorata* cultivars in Clive's National Collection are sometimes referred to as 'Dorset violets', or even 'Victorian Dorset violets', but that is simply because they are grown in the family nursery on Dorset's spectacular Jurassic Coast, and the collection includes many important historic kinds.

He does, however, hold a small collection of 'Devon violets', large-flowered remnants of the cut-flower trade that once flourished in the neighbouring county, along with a dozen of the best Parma violets – tender, double-flowered mademoiselles that need to be mollycoddled under glass.

Viola odorata, however, our native sweet violet, is a tough little beast, and from the 1820s, breeders began to cross it with the larger, earlier, Russian viola, *Viola suavis*, to encourage earlier (and therefore more profitable) flowering – with the increased benefit of even greater hardiness. Modern cultivars, then, tend to be resilient, garden-worthy plants, suitable for a variety of garden situations. *V. odorata* 'Empress Augusta' and *V.* 'Perle Rose' make neat, low-growing mounds, perfect for the rock garden. *V.* 'Clive Groves', and the old French cultivar 'Coeur d'Alsace' are sturdy enough to naturalise alongside wild violets on a grassy bank, while the other cultivars featured here will all thrive in a moist but well-drained spot in the shade of deciduous trees or shrubs. Alternatively, grow them between larger summer-flowering perennials: violets need plenty of sun in winter to encourage them to flower, but must have shade in summer. (It was summer baking on south-facing slopes that caused commercially grown violets to succumb to red spider mite, and wiped out the cut-flower industry.)

Ambra Edwards is a freelance writer specialising in gardens. She writes for the *Guardian* and regularly contributes to GARDENS ILLUSTRATED.

The beauty of the cultivated sweet violets is that they have never strayed too far from the wild form. Early breeders concentrated on longer stalks for cutting, while Clive's experiments over 40 years have been principally in broadening the colour range. So the gamine delicacy of the five-petalled single flowers has never been compromised, nor has anyone tampered with the evergreen, heart-shaped foliage that sets off the blooms so perfectly.

Even the unusual double forms, 'Countess of Shaftesbury' and 'Mrs David Lloyd George', have a rare grace. Both were believed lost to cultivation, but were reintroduced by Clive.

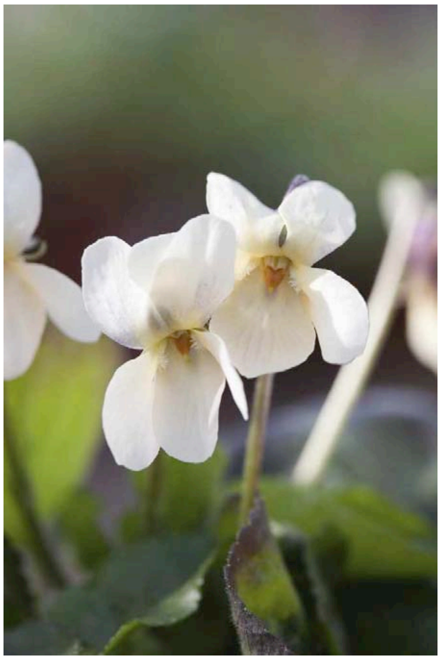
Parma violets

The origins of Parma violets are a mystery. They are believed to have been brought by traders from Asia Minor into Italy, where they were growing around Parma and Naples by the 16th century, but no wild colonies have ever been found. By the 1850s, they were widely grown in France for posies, especially around Toulouse, and had become fashionable plants in Britain: Queen Victoria was a devotee, and thousands of plants were raised every year by the royal gardeners at Windsor.

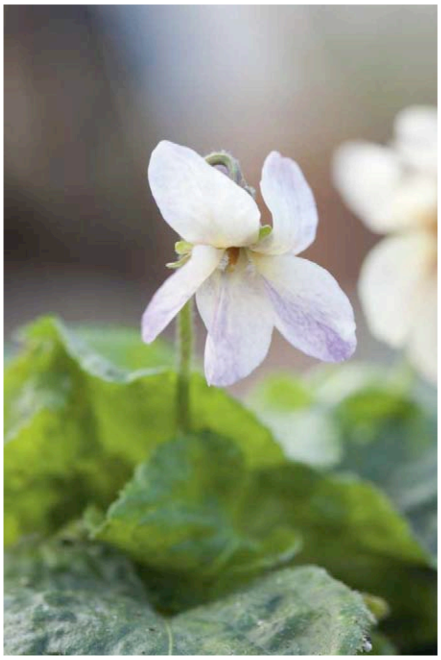
The fragrance of Parma violets has a sugary sweetness quite unlike the pungent notes of *Viola odorata*. The leaves are rounder and glossier, and the blooms full and double, sometimes so heavy that they cause the long, slender stems to droop, making them very suitable for wall containers or hanging baskets. *V.* 'Fee Jalucine', however, is a rare cultivar with very fine, large, single flowers. All are best grown in pots that can be moved into the greenhouse or cold-frame for the winter. □

• Clive Groves' pick of violas continues over the next six pages. ▷

Viola sulphurea

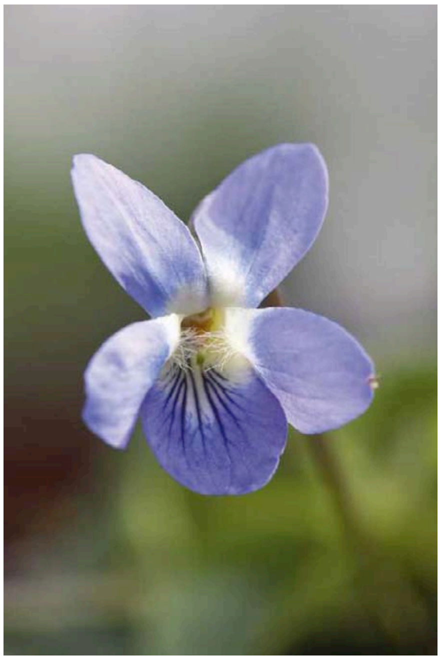


VIOLA 'SULFUREA'
The creamy yellow blooms have a way of turning up unannounced in gardens, from who knows where. This compact, pale lemon form was spotted in Clive's nursery by Australian enthusiast Rob Pace.

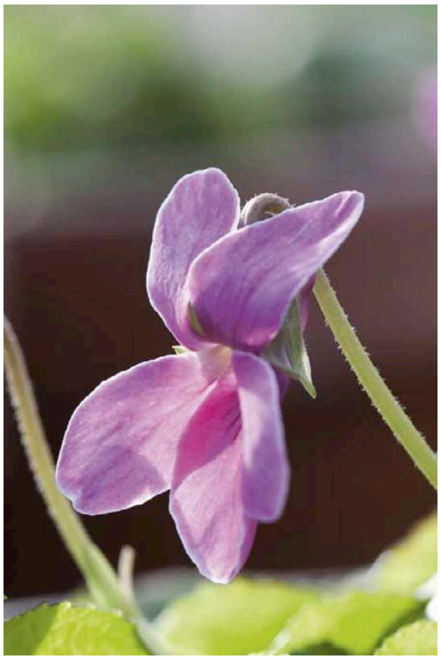


V. 'CREPUSCULE'
This large-flowered form from Australia has buff to lemon petals smudged over with dusky purple, as befits its name.

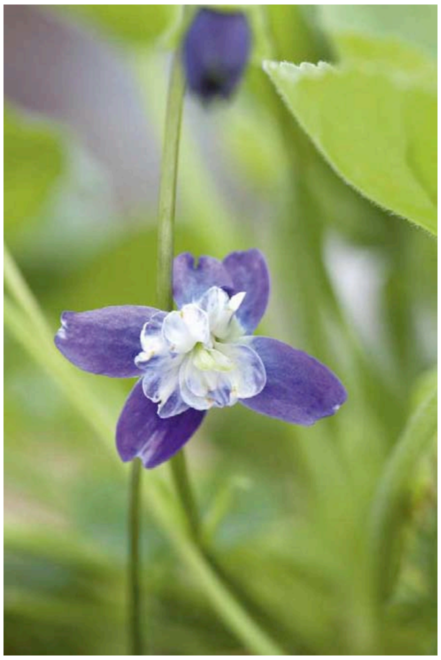
Heirloom cultivars



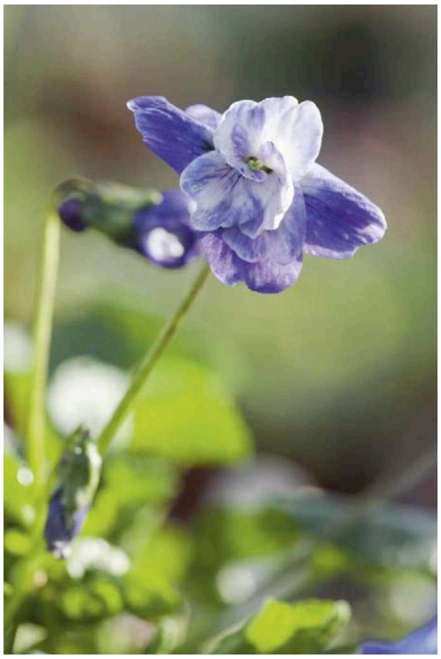
***V. ODORATA* 'EMPRESS AUGUSTA'**
Long-lasting and very floriferous, this dependable French variety makes a flat mound close to the ground, and associates well with alpines. A pretty pale blue flower, subtly streaked, with a white throat.



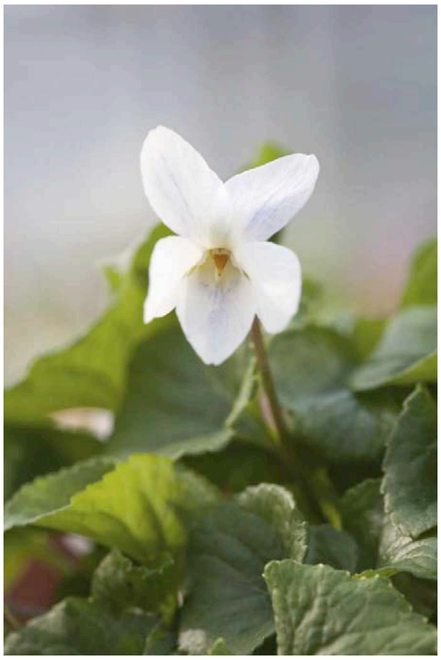
***V.* 'COEUR D'ALSACE'**
A vigorous and easy violet, bred in 1916 by the leading French grower Armand Millet, its long stem and strong scent making it ideal for posies. Pink, upswept petals have the finest margin of white.



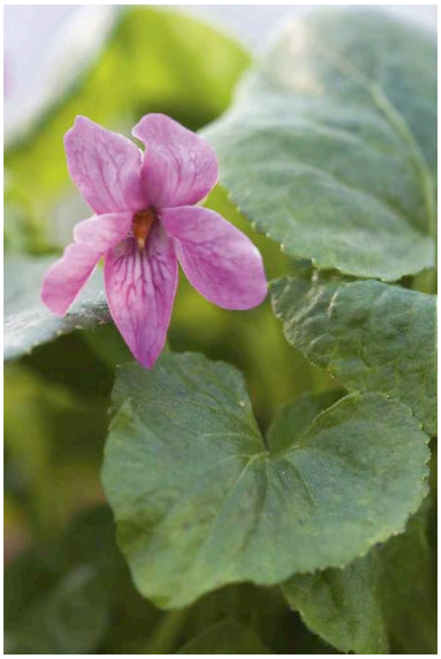
***V.* 'MRS DAVID LLOYD GEORGE'**
In the early 20th century, JJ Kettle had a famous violet farm at Corfe Mullen, and this, its most celebrated bloom, became known as 'The Dorset Violet'. Clive searched for it for years before a friend found a piece in an old lady's garden in Australia. Rare semi-double.



***V.* COUNTESS OF SHAFTESBURY**
Another lost semi-double from Corfe Mullen, rediscovered in the 1960s and resettled in California. The central rosette stands proud, marbled with pink and white with a protruding green calyx. Clive's favourite.

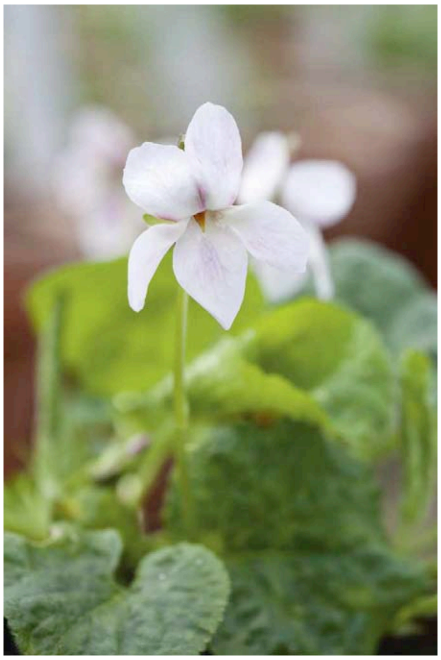


***V.* 'MRS R. BARTON'**
Mrs Barton was the foreman's wife at Windward's, a leading Devon violet nursery that closed in 1964. Though pure white in mild weather, she develops a lilac blush in the cold. Perhaps the lady used to get a red nose?

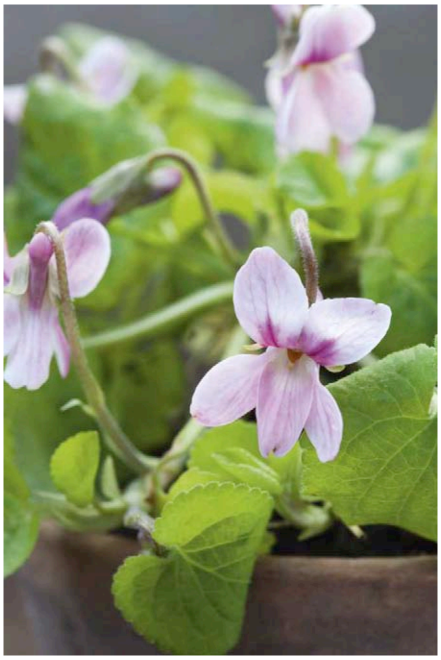


***V.* 'PERLE ROSE'**
One of the latest flowering violets, lasting well into April, 'Perle Rose' bears an abundance of tiny rosy flowers on a neat, low mound of foliage. A strongly scented old French cultivar (c1902) that is utterly dependable.

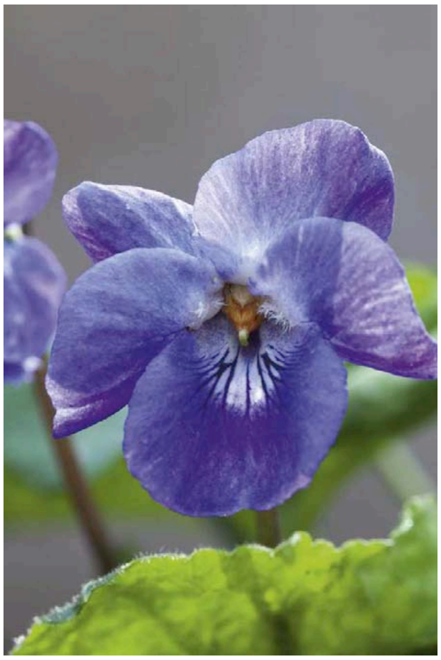
Violets named for the Groves family



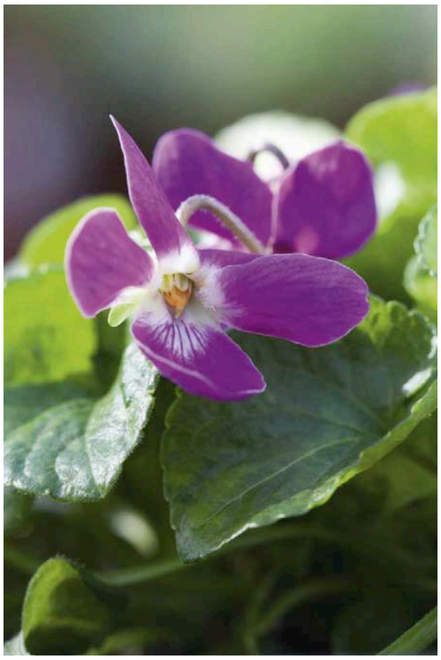
V. PRINCESS THIRZA
Thirza is a Groves family name – the first Thirza was a schoolmistress in Toller Porcorum. The front of the petals are white, swirled with pink, like raspberry ripple, while the backs have a more solid pink blush.



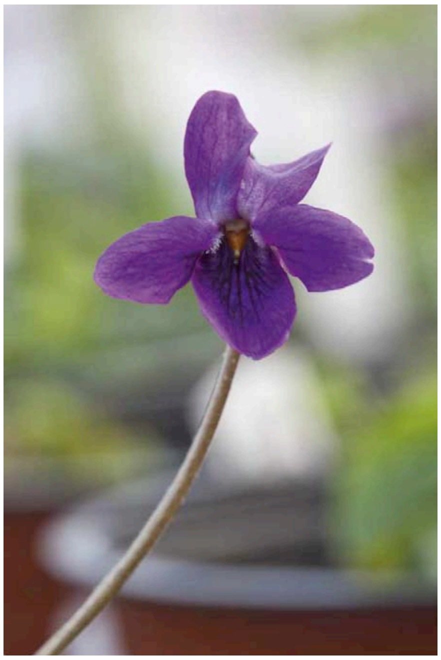
V. BECKY GROVES
A violet with the poise of a dancer – the top petals swept back, with a graceful curl to the stem. Two-tone petals are deep carmine pink at the centre, paler round the outside, set off by bright foliage. Bright and bubbly.



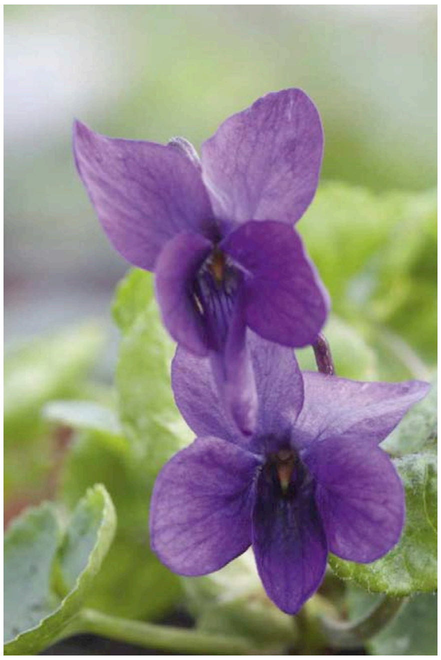
V. CHRISTOPHER WILLIAM GROVES
The fullness of the flower, with its curling petals, invites comparison with a peony or rose. The colour is a rich purple blue, but with a barely perceptible speckling that lends it a lightness and sheen.



V. 'LYDIA'S LEGACY'
A compact, mounding viola that makes a most refined and beautiful pot plant. The flowers have a lovely open form, with petals that curl round, their sumptuous deep magenta framed by the finest white rim.

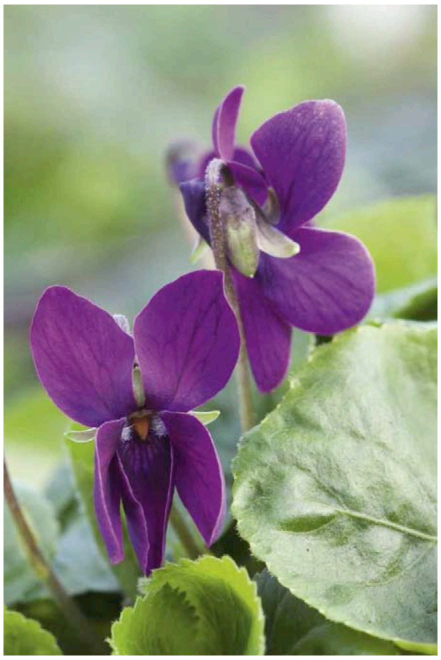


V. 'GRANDAD'S VIOLET'
This violet was found on the farm where Clive's wife grew up. It could not be identified, so was always known as 'Grandad's Violet'. Extremely hardy, with a solid little flower in a strong plum colour that shows up well at a distance.

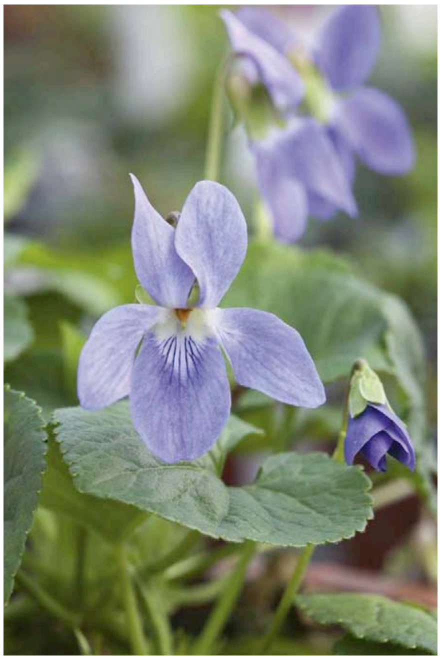


V. 'CLIVE GROVES'
The only hybrid to be bred by Clive's father, this useful cultivar has all the robustness and powerful scent of the native, but with longer stems that make it good for cutting, and an attractive reddish cast to the colour.

Other hardy singles



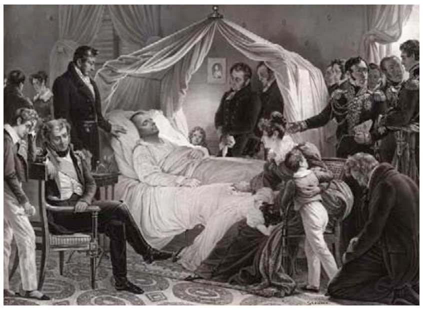
***V. ODORATA* 'KIMBERLEY'S ALICE'**
What this violet lacks in scent it makes up for in colour – a glowing episcopal purple of almost luminous intensity. The round leaves are nicely pinked, the stems of medium length, and you certainly can't miss it.



***V. ODORATA* 'CAROL LOCKTON'**
Clive found this large, pale blue violet with white throat being offered at a Devon plant stall as 'Opéra', but knew it was no violet he had seen before. So he named it after the lady who found it. It is very mutable, so always full of interest.

Violet history

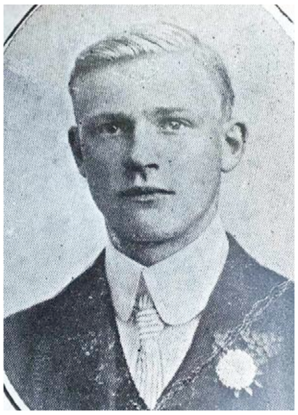
Sweet violets have been grown and loved for many years. They appear in the wall paintings of Knossos on the island of Crete dating from the second millennium BC; the violet was the symbol of Athens, traded in the marketplace around 400BC; the Roman writer Varro advises on how to build a violarium – a raised bed for violets – in 40AD. The name viola derives from the Greek myth of Io – one of the many unfortunate loves of Zeus. Perhaps to console her for being turned into a cow, the earth brought forth violets to be her food. Another myth tells how Orpheus sat to rest, and where he laid down his lute, the first violet sprang. Pliny advised garlands of violets to ward off headaches, while the Arabs flavoured sherbet with violets, and prescribed it for the sting of the scorpion. Violets appear as strewing and medicinal herbs in medieval gardens, and in the nosegays of the Elizabethans. The 16th-century herbalist Gerard described violets as the 'chiefest beauty' of the garden. It was also a favourite with Napoleon and Josephine: he died wearing a locket of violets picked from her grave. From the late 18th century they were used to produce the forerunner of litmus paper in Britain, and for perfumery in France. The Victorians adored them, and though they went out of fashion after the Second World War, my granny received a posy from her husband every Sunday in spring. ▷



THE BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY

The Groves family violets

It was Clive's grandfather (pictured below) who started growing violets, for cut flowers; then his son Charles followed on with potted plants, buying up the stock as the once famous violet farms of Dorset and Devon were decimated by war and disease. Though chiefly concerned with rescuing old cultivars, he did breed one outstanding violet, which he named after his son, 'Clive Groves'. Clive has been breeding violas for over 40 years, naming his proudest achievements after his family. The latest to be named, in March 2012, is the superb, light purple peony-flowered 'Christopher William Groves', named for Clive's younger son. It has taken six years of perfecting the breeding to create a flower fit to stand beside his siblings – poised and graceful pink 'Becky Groves' and vigorous, large-flowered 'Charles Winston Groves'. But closest to Clive's heart is perhaps 'Lydia's Legacy', a rich, deep pink sport of sugar-pink 'Lydia Groves', nurtured from a runner which appeared just a week after his mother's death, and treasured as a gift from the grave.



COURTESY OF THE GROVES FAMILY

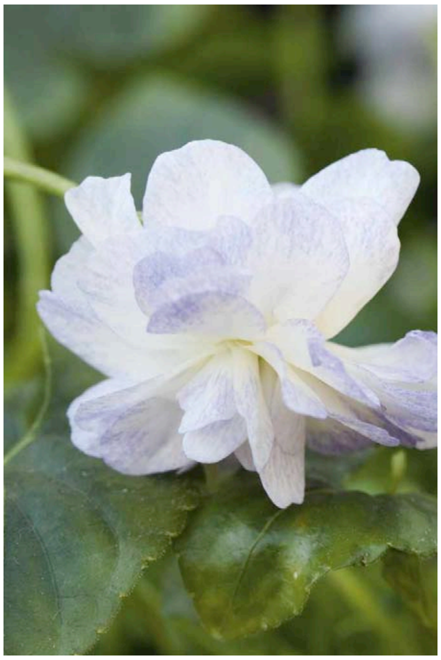
Cultivation

Sweet violets prefer moist, humus-rich alkaline soil. Improve acid or heavy soils with plenty of organic matter and a generous mulch of mushroom compost. Water well, feed occasionally with liquid fertiliser and keep runners picked off during the growing season.

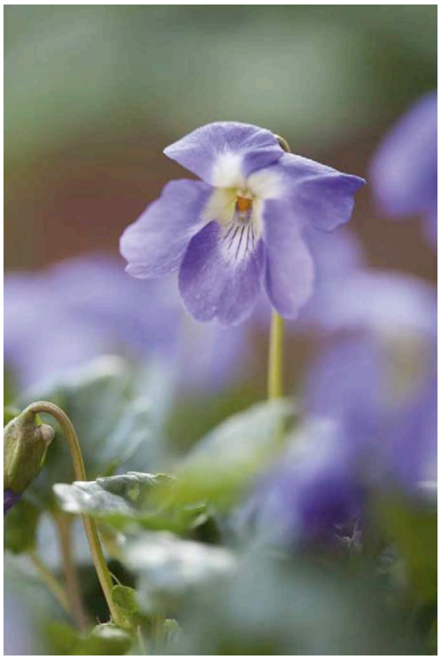
Where to buy

Groves Nurseries, Bridport, Dorset DT6 4BA
Tel 01308 422654 www.grovesnurseries.co.uk

Parmas

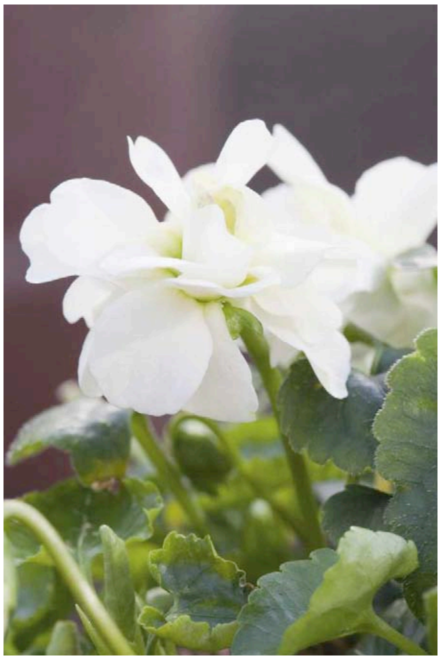


V. 'ASHVALE BLUE'
This violet is primarily white, with a dabbing of pale lavender-purple on the outer petals that make it look as if it has been pressed against an ink pad. The flower is heavy, full and symmetrical with a greeny tint in the base.

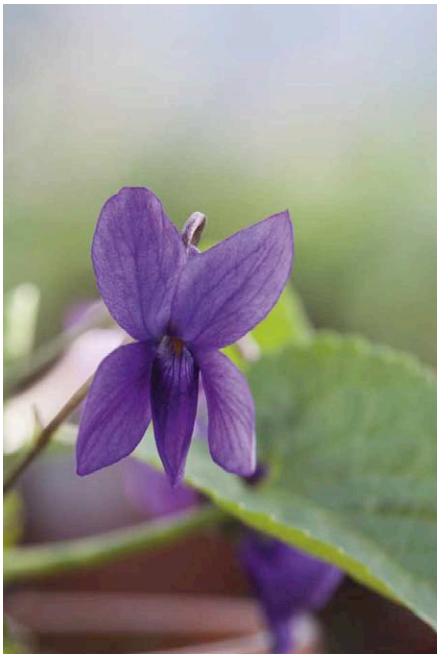


V. 'FEE JALUCINE'
Until 1999, parma violets were double. Then Nathalie Casbas gathered some seed from the classic 'Parme de Toulouse' and produced this supremely elegant single – but still with the perfume and foliage typical of the parmas.

Natives

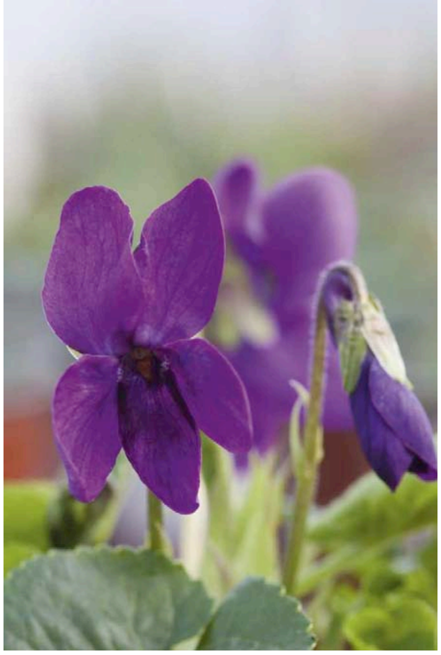


V. 'HOPLEY'S WHITE'
The colour is a lustrous creamy white, with a hint of green at the heart, and the bloom so full and perfect you might take it for a miniature gardenia. Parma violets were popular buttonholes in Edwardian times.

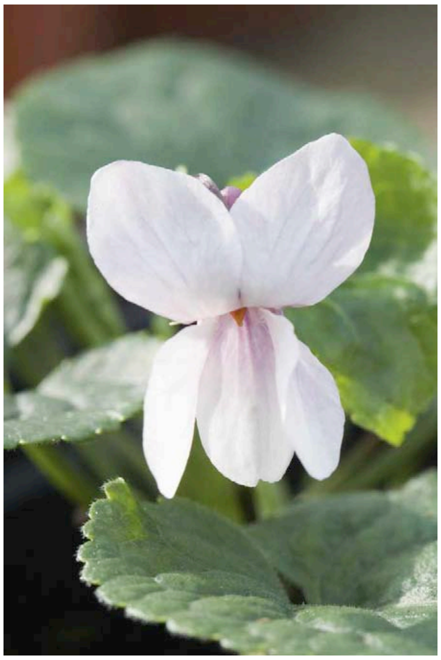


VIOLA ODORATA
The sweet violet is one of nine native to Britain. The edible flowers are usually violet in colour, but it also exists in a white form ('Alba'), common in Dorset and Hampshire, and a pink ('Rosea'), now exceedingly rare.

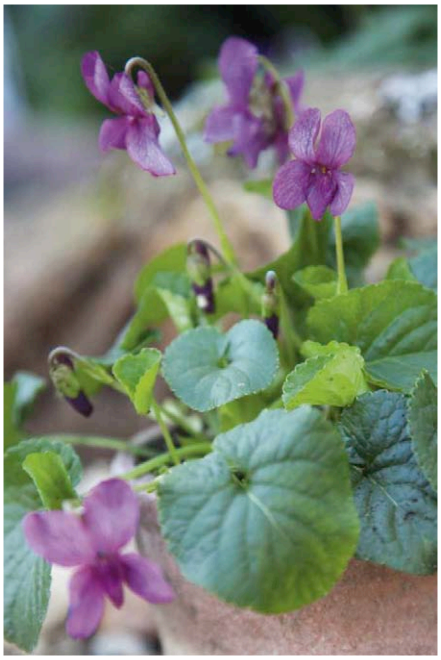
Other violets bred by Clive Groves



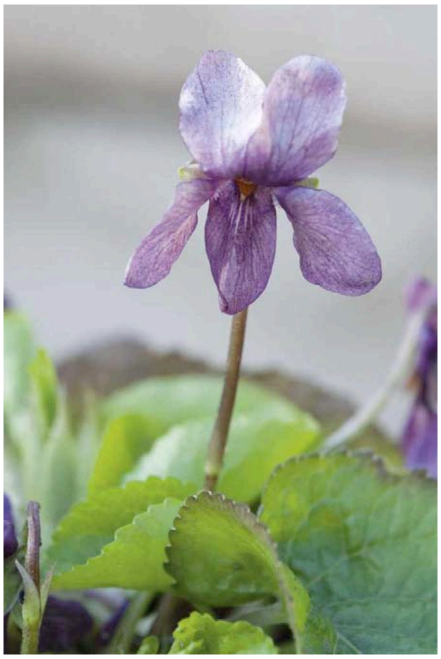
V. 'FRED MOREY'
Very large, intensely coloured purple flowers with strong veining. A strong-growing violet, excellent for cutting. Fred Morey worked for Groves for over 50 years, becoming their chief violet propagator.



V. 'LEES PEACHY PINK'
George Lees was a grower who named a famous violet after Queen Victoria, and every year would send her a loyal posy. This sturdy and free-flowering violet, with pretty foliage, was named in his honour.



V. 'MULBERRY'
Clive Groves has worked hard to increase the colour range of violets, looking to pinks, reds, and plums. 'Mulberry' is a medium sized plant with a pretty rounded flower head, just the colour, Clive insists, of squashed mulberries.



V. 'PARCHMENT'
This extraordinary little violet, bred by Clive, was the Gold Medal Winner at the 2007 International Congress of Violets. It starts an ethereal amethyst-grey, goldening to a smoky brown-grey as it matures. Unique.

Margaret Owen

A whirlwind of energy with a passion for charity work, this highly respected plantswoman adores the tiny yet tenacious snowdrop

WORDS VAL BOURNE PORTRAIT CHARLIE HOPKINSON

It was a love of flower arranging that instilled in Margaret Owen a passion for unusual plants with good foliage and handsome flowers. "When you're competing," she explained "you don't win on what you buy, you win on what you grow and the more interesting, the better." Over the years Margaret has developed a very good eye for a plant, snowdrops in particular and is now a well-loved and highly respected plantswoman and galanthophile, gardening at The Patch, an acre of land a few miles south of Shrewsbury.

Margaret's love of gardening was fostered by her father who farmed at Garston, near Watford in Hertfordshire. "He was unusual, there aren't many farmers who garden as well as farm." When war was declared they had no help at all, so Margaret weeded the onions and carrots in their large farmhouse vegetable garden. "Finally I asked for my own small piece of garden," Margaret recalled, "and I grew strawberries."

Margaret's father had a famous pedigree herd of Ayrshire cattle, so when the 20-year-old Margaret Mackay met Godfrey Owen, a member of the Young Farmers with his own farm and Fresian herd, they hit it off. "He proposed to me in a cattle shed and my nursing career at St Bartholomew's in London came to an abrupt end."

Margaret raised four children, kept flocks of chickens for eggs and registered all their pedigree cattle; no easy task. As time went by the family owned or rented land in Cornwall, Scotland and Herefordshire, as well as Shropshire, so driving from one end of the country to the other became standard practice. Visits to famous nurseries began then – whether it was Jack Drake's alpines in the highlands, or Margery Fish's garden in Somerset, or Elizabeth Strangman's nursery at Hawkhurst in East Sussex.

Everything changed abruptly 30 years ago when Godfrey died from a brain tumour. Margaret, then in her 50s, made the brave decision to hand the family farm to her son John Godfrey Owen. With a huge void to fill she put her vast energies into plants, and began crisscrossing the country, meeting fellow enthusiasts. Her interest in snowdrops began then and Godfrey is commemorated by a six-petalled form of *Galanthus elwesii*, which Margaret discovered in the nearby village of Wrentnall in February 1996. She named it 'Godfrey Owen' and their four children (Sally Wickenden, Jess Egerton, Decima MacAuley and John Godfrey Owen) also have snowdrops named after them.

Her plants are widely admired by the horticultural elite. Her *Camassia* hybrids, which were shown at Chelsea in 2008, come in a range of pinks, mauves and blues. She saw her first pink camassias at Attingham Park (a National Trust property in Shropshire) and expected to be able to order some at the next Chelsea FlowerShow. She quickly realised that they weren't available, but she was able to get some bulbs from Attingham. "These formed the basis of my collection," she explains.

This collection was staged by fellow enthusiast Tom Miller at RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show in 2010, winning the award for the most interesting exhibit.

Margaret is best known for her annual snowdrop sale, which always takes place at The Patch on the last Sunday in February. Snowdrops, many of them rarities provided by snowdrop connoisseurs, are dug up there and then and sold. Soup, sandwiches and cake are served to stave off the wintry weather, for spring arrives late in Shropshire. At the end of the day the proceeds, some £6,000 in 2012, are donated to The Multiple Sclerosis Society because Margaret's youngest sister died of the disease in her forties. All this activity and charitable work, which also involves flower arranging, bridge parties and needlework, earned her an MBE in 2010.

There is simply no one quite like this feisty lady. While most of us are still thinking about doing something, Margaret is getting on with it. A month after her snowdrop opening, she organised the first Heritage Daffodil Trail with lectures and talks. The next will take place at the end of March. It's just the latest feather in this remarkable plantswoman's hat.

Snowdrop opening Sunday 24 February from 11am-3pm. The Patch, Acton Pigot, Acton Burnell, Shropshire SY5 7PH. Tel 01743 362139. Entry £3 in aid of the Shropshire branch of the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

NEXT MONTH Sissinghurst's head gardener Alexis Datta.

> *"While most of us are still thinking about doing something, Margaret is getting on with it"*

Fast to increase, *G. nivalis* 'Angelique' makes a fine carpet beneath a deciduous host.

Collecting snowdrops

Galanthus guru Matt Bishop has some advice for budding galanthophiles

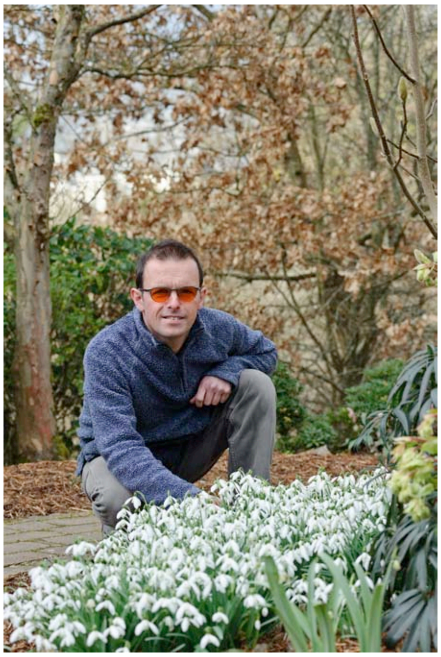
WORDS AMBRA EDWARDS PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM

Matt Bishop, former head gardener at The Garden House in Devon, and co-author of the galanthophile Bible (*Snowdrops: A Monograph of Cultivated Galanthus*, Griffin Press, 2002), ascribes his love of snowdrops to his "slightly aspergic nature".

Arriving as a student at Wisley, he discovered the National Collection there, and was instantly smitten. "I was intrigued by these things that flowered in mid-winter and looked to see what the differences were between them – I like to see things in their categories and know where they fit.

"I started collecting at 19, with *Galanthus* 'S. Arnott', *G.* 'Hill Poë', green-tipped forms of *G. elwesii* and Greatorex doubles. Nothing out of the ordinary, just very good garden plants that I would still recommend to everyone. While I was at university, I began to read more about them and find out where they came from. Every one seemed to have a story, and it was interesting to find it out. So I began to buy from some of the catalogues, and to meet some of the collection holders, and from then on, you might say it snowballed! I've no idea how many cultivars I have now – I gave up counting years ago."

Most galanthophiles build up their collections from favourite catalogues – buying a few new varieties each year as they come along. A few go out hunting for new snowdrops themselves, while an even smaller number create their own cultivars by growing snowdrops from seed. Here, success seems to come as much by chance as deliberate breeding.



Bulbs of new cultivars can be expensive, Matt concedes, but then it can take up to ten years to build up sufficient numbers to offer commercially.

With so many cultivars to choose from, many collectors go for a niche in the genus – plants that are predominantly green, or yellow, or perhaps doubles. Matt's own interest centres on "the way the snowdrop is itself evolving".

"I get huge pleasure from charting the incremental development of the genus as new variations appear over time – the first *G. nivalis* with yellow markings on the outer segment, or a new flower shape (the first inverse Poculiform Group) in *elwesii* – that was first seen in 2004. Since then there have been another four or five, yet before 2001 that variant had never been recorded.

"But for a novice collector, I would always start with snowdrops that have been around a long time. There's a reason for that. 'Bertram Anderson', 'Peter Gatehouse', 'S. Arnott', 'Straffan' and a lot of the *elwesiis* are all absolutely dependable – quite outstanding garden plants. It is best to buy a few more of a smaller number of cultivars, so they bulk up more quickly – it makes a better show in the garden and makes the early acquisitions more rewarding at a crucial point in the development of your interest. And I would go for ones that are really distinct, that you can tell apart easily – you don't want to end up with a collection that all looks the same.

"Go for a broad range of forms from different species. And above all, a good range of flowering times. If you choose carefully, you can enjoy snowdrops from November through to March."

Matt suggests starting off the season with an elegant early *G. elwesii* like 'Mrs MacNamara' or beautiful, robust 'Godfrey Owen'. You're spoilt for choice mid-season, but maybe include a good, easy yellow such as *G. plicatus* 'Wendy's Gold'. 'Hill Poë' is a sturdy double, late and distinctive. 'Mighty Atom' is aptly named, and sees the season out with a flourish.

"You will soon have your favourites. Mine change all the time, but I do have a fondness for 'Trumps' – one of my own, but a damn good garden plant."

Turn to page 76 for a selection of Matt's favourites ▷

Early season

1 ***Galanthus reginae-olgae***
The first of the snowdrops, flowering from early October, originating in the Peloponnese. The flower appears before the leaves, which develop a silver stripe.

2 ***G. elwesii* 'Ivy Cottage Corporal'**
This early *elwesii* has two green 'V's set one above the other on the pleated inner segments, resembling a corporal's stripes.

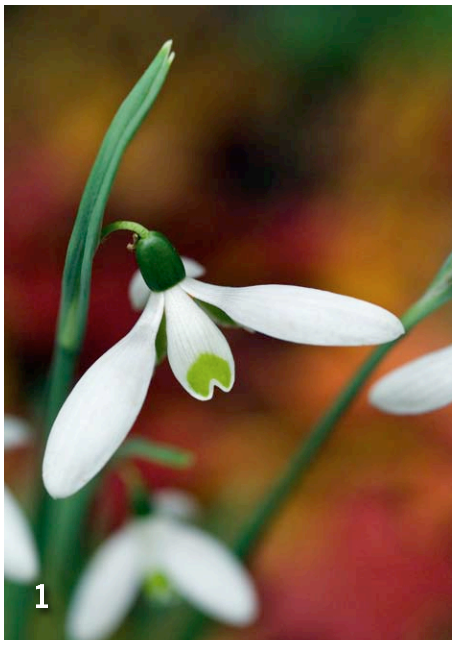
3 ***G. elwesii* 'Godfrey Owen'**
A most unusual snowdrop, found around 1996, having six outer and six inner segments (snowdrops generally have only three), arranged in symmetrical whorls of three.

4 ***G. elwesii* 'Mrs MacNamara'**
Often in flower by early January, this tall (25-30cm) upright, supremely elegant snowdrop carries its flowers on long, erect pedicels, set off by slim, pale leaves.

5 ***G. elwesii* 'Peter Gatehouse'**
Short (10cm) and sturdy, often in flower by November. The distinctive marking has been likened to a pair of dark green scissors with paler handles.

6 ***G.* 'Fly Fishing'**
The must-have snowdrop of 2011, this tall and handsome specimen has one of the longest pedicels of all snowdrops.

7 ***G. elwesii* (Hiemalis Group) 'Barnes' (not pictured)**
Often in flower by mid-October to November, this is an easy, medium-sized (15cm) snowdrop with shapely flowers.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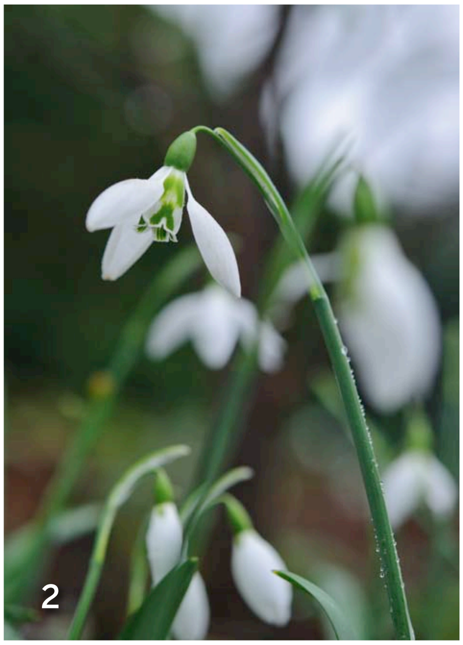
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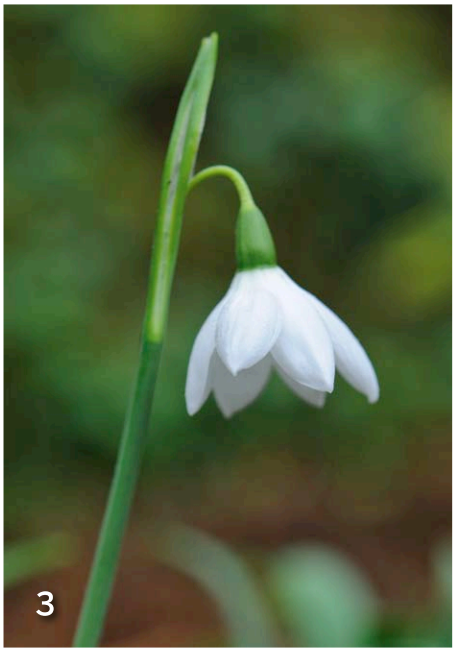
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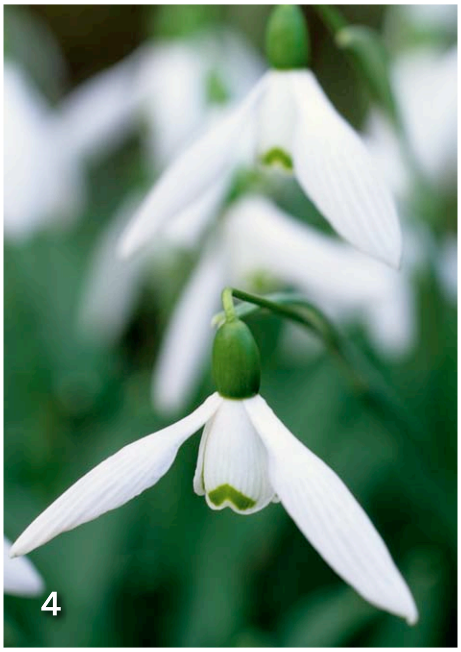
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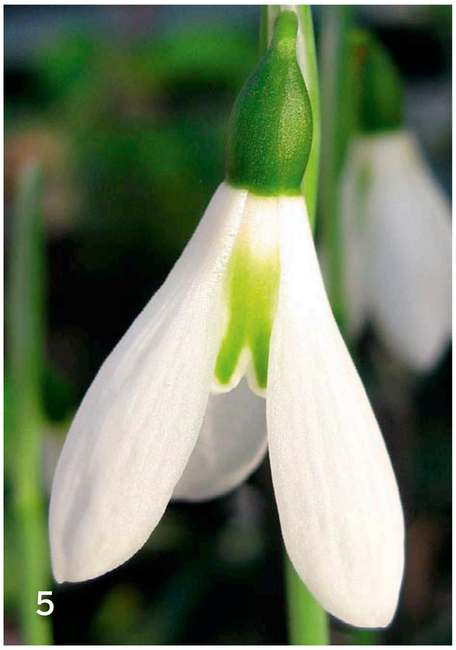
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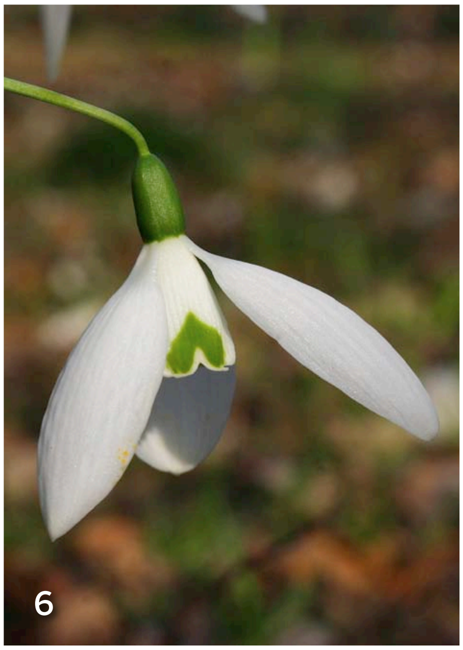
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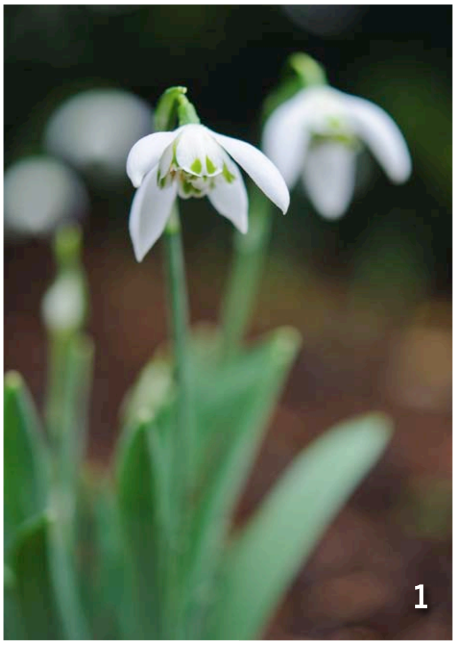
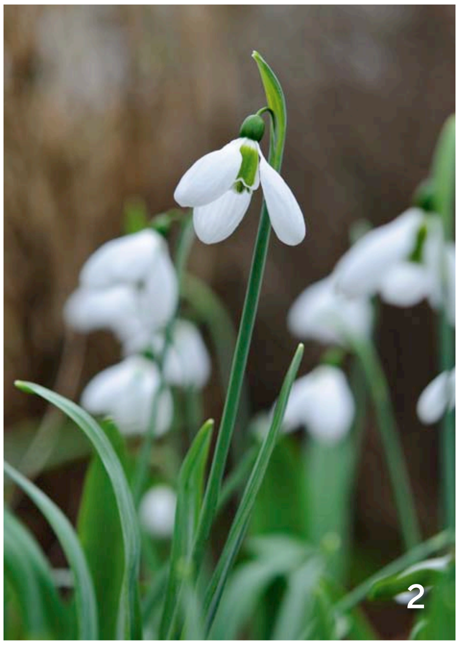
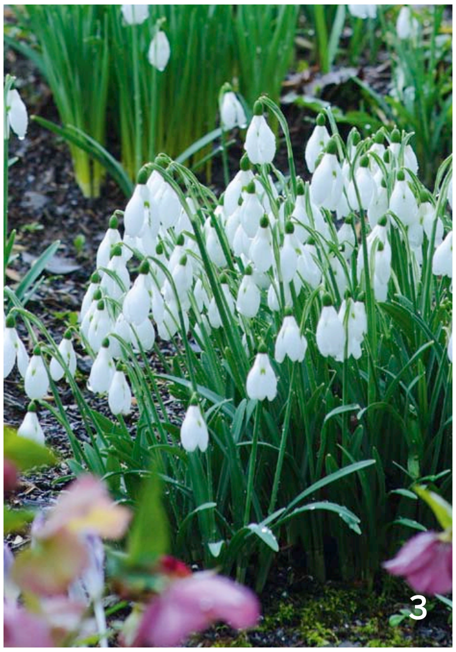
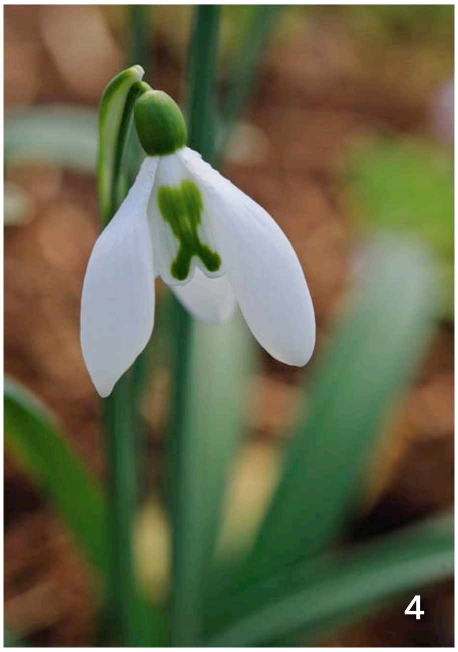
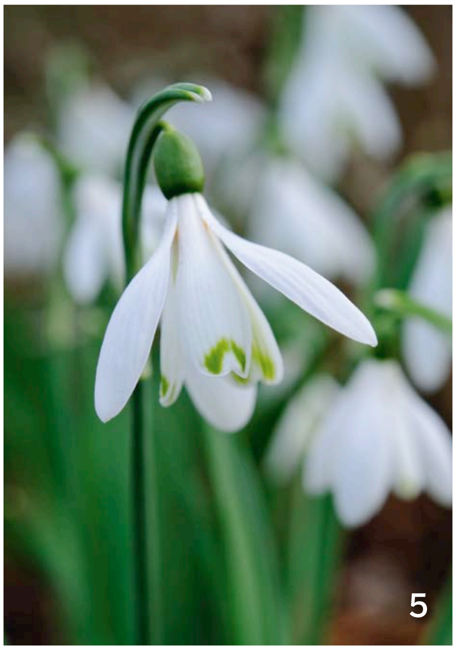
Mid season

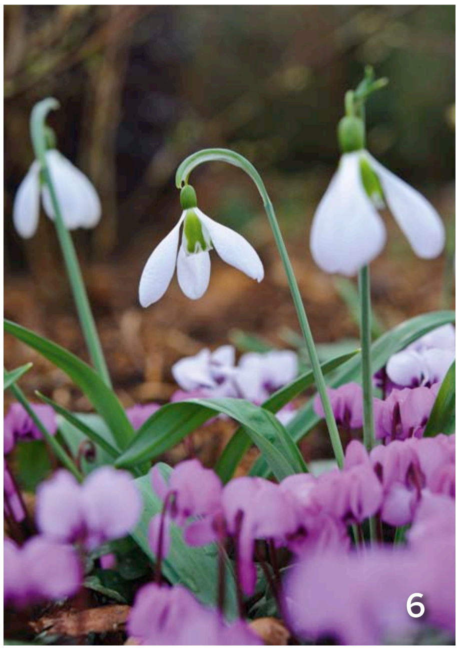












1 ***G.* ‘Richard Ayres’**
Easy, vigorous and quick to clump up, this is one of the tallest of the doubles at 30cm. Named after the head gardener at Anglesey Abbey, where it grows en masse.

2 ***G.* ‘Melanie Broughton’**
Another tall, erect snowdrop, with heavy, widely spaced, spoon-like outer segments that Matt describes as ‘chubby’. Wide blue-grey leaves. Also from Anglesey Abbey.

3 ***G.* ‘S. Arnott’**
The very best snowdrop for beginners – statuesque, sturdy, sweetly scented and fast to increase. The flowers are big and bold, the petals thick and shiny, and the buds open a few at a time, giving many weeks of interest.

4 ***G.* ‘Lord Lieutenant’**
Named after galanthophile Henry Elwes, who was Lord-Lieutenant for Gloucestershire, the flowers, most appropriately, seem to stand to attention, held almost horizontally on erect stems. Deep green x-shaped inner marking.

5 ***G. nivalis* (Poculiformis Group) ‘Angelique’**
Not quite an albino (one without any inner markings), heavy white outer segments enclose elongated inner segments usually (but not always) marked with two bold green dots. Stands around 14cm tall.

6 ***G. plicatus* ‘Kew’**
Big flowers hang neatly as a lampshade, with broad, spreading outer segments and an inner segment that is almost entirely green. Exceedingly rare, at one time thought extinct, but growing well at The Garden House.

Continued on page 78 ▷

Mid season (cont.)

7 ***G.* 'Straffan'**
One of the oldest hybrids, admired by EA Bowles as 'the most beautiful of all forms'; easy, fast to increase, and often producing two flower-stalks. Distinctively marked in the shape of a Chinese bridge.

8 ***G.* 'Trumps'**
A very desirable new snowdrop introduced by Matt, with an elegant, flaring pagoda shape, dark green splashes on the outer segments and a strong horseshoe mark on the inner.

9 ***G.* 'LP Short'**
A rare green-tipped Greatorex double from the Wisley collection.

10 ***G.* 'Sentinel'**
Top and bottom inner markings clearly divided by white, enclosed with large, heavily ridged outers.

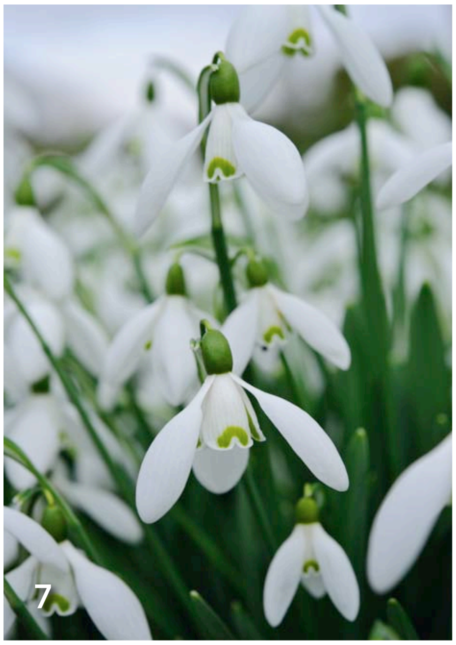
11 ***G.* 'Primrose Warburg'**
Found in this formidable galanthophile's garden soon after her death, this dainty snowdrop has yellowish leaves, a yellow ovary and a yellow horseshoe on the inner segment.

12 ***G.* 'Green Arrow'**
Light, perky snowdrop with the tips of the outer segments flushed with green.

13 ***G. plicatus* 'Percy Picton'**
(not pictured)
One of the finest long pedicelled snowdrops, often with two flower stems.

14 ***G. elwesii* 'Green Brush'**
(not pictured)
Distinctive, chunky snowdrop, with the tips of the outer segments strongly marked in green.

15 ***G. elwesii* 'Rosemary Burnham'**
(not pictured)
Solid green outer, very short.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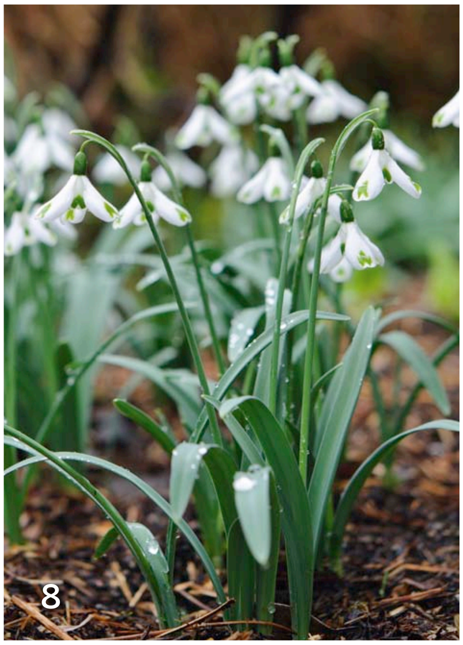
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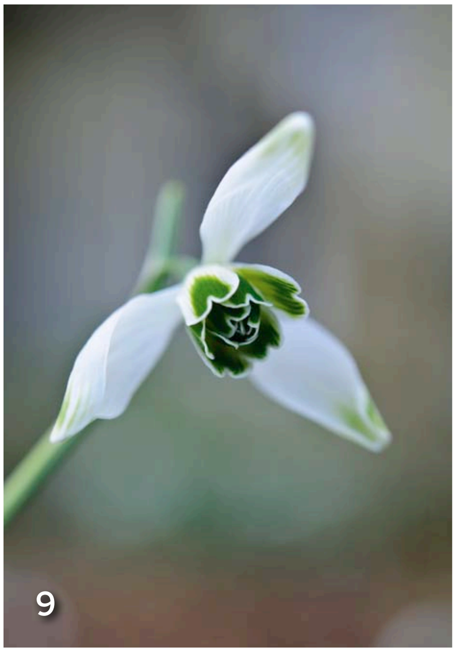
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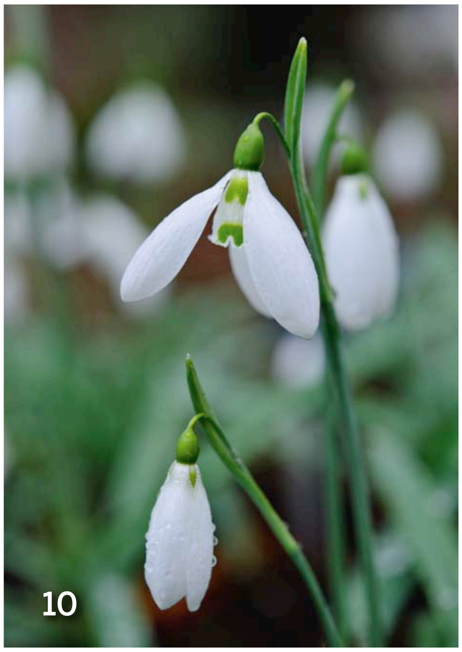
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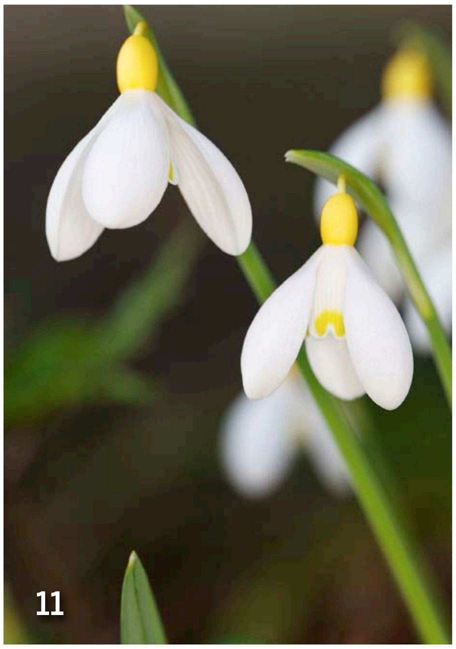
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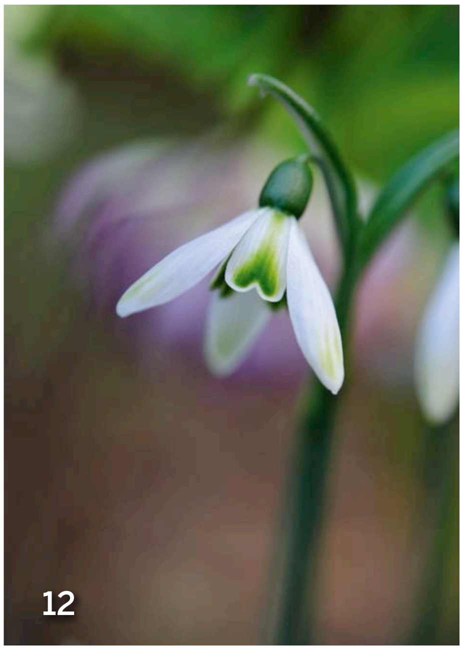
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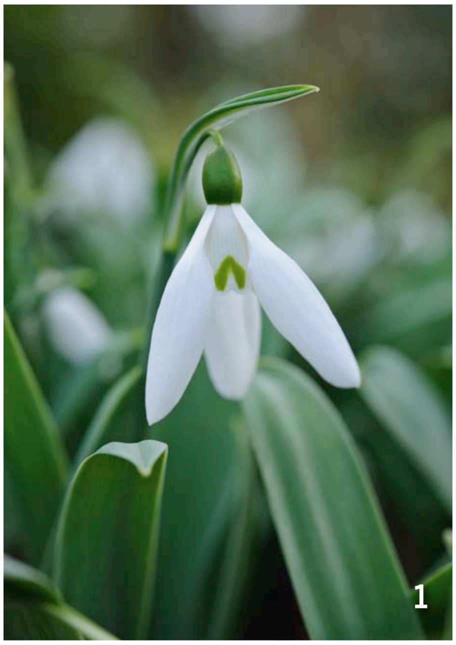
Late season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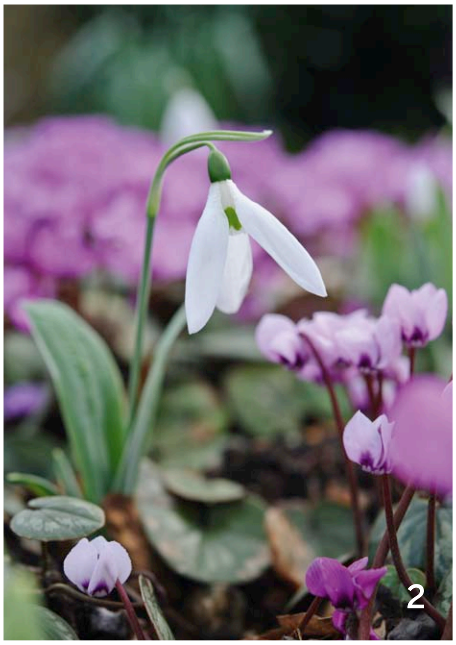
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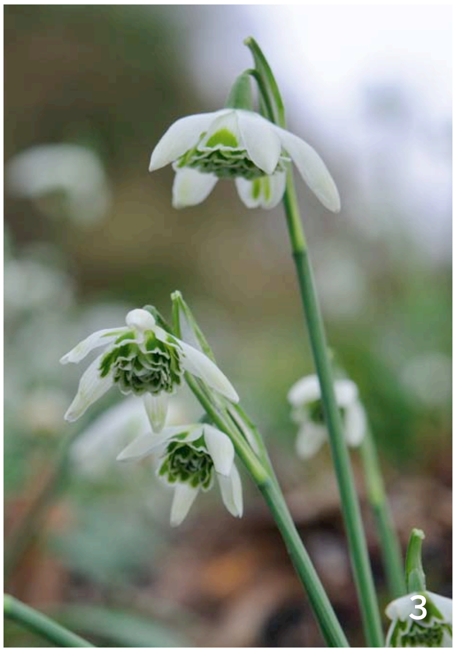
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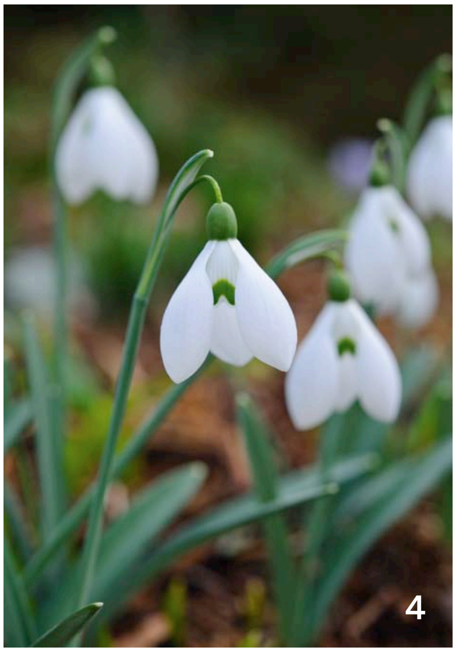
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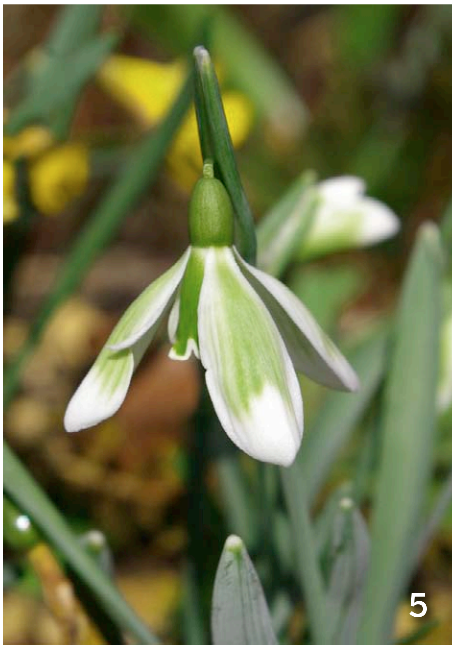
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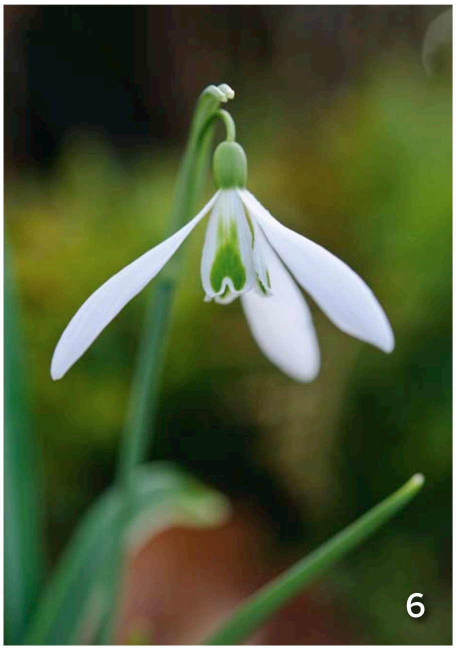
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5 JOHN GRIMSHAW

1 ***G. elwesii*** **'Marjorie Brown'**
A substantial (17cm), vigorous, garden-worthy cultivar flowering into mid-March, producing three arched, blue-grey leaves.

2 ***G. elwesii*** **var.** ***monostictus*** **'Miller's Late'**
One of the last snowdrops to flower, with long outer segments and a distinctive strongly arched spathe that curls over the top of the flower. Slow to increase.

3 ***G.*** **'Hill Poë'**
An old cultivar, recommended by EA Bowles in 1917, and still one of the best and most reliable doubles. Five or more outer segments enclose a neat rosette of tightly packed inner segments.

4 ***G.*** **'Mighty Atom'**
The mightiness lies in flower size rather than stature – a scant 12cm. But the flowers, arriving from late February, are whoppers – heavy, rounded and solid.

5 ***G. nivalis*** **'Virescens'**
Despite its great age this cultivar remains distinct among green-shaded snowdrops.

6 ***G.*** **'Terry Jones'**
Exceptionally elegant, long and slender. With unusually long outer segments, this hybrid was named by Matt after the Devon plantsman in whose garden it was found.

7 ***G.*** **'Grayswood'**
(not pictured)
A superb and vigorous selection with good sized flowers over pale grey foliage.

WHERE TO SEE

The Garden House is open for viewing every weekend in February.
The Garden House, Buckland Monachorum, Yelverton, Devon PL20 7LQ.
www.thegardenhouse.org.uk

WHERE TO BUY

- You can now buy choice snowdrops direct from Matt at **www.mattbishopsnowdrops.co.uk**
- **Avon Bulbs** www.avonbulbs.co.uk
- **The Snowdrop Company,** Barn Cottage, Shilton, Oxfordshire OX18 4AB. Tel 01993 842177

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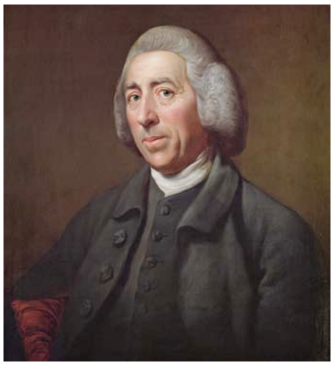
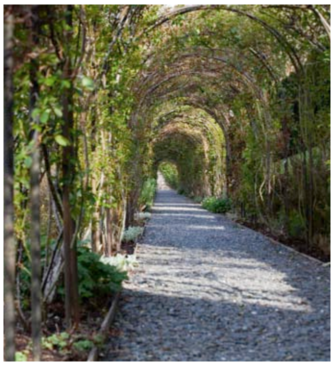
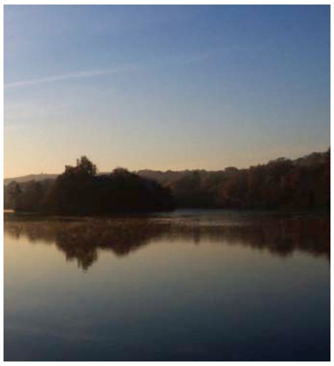
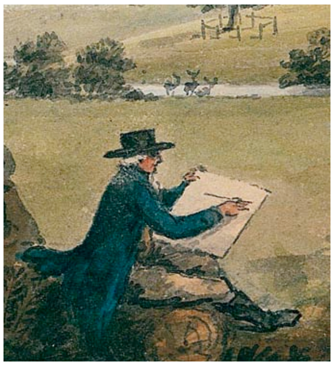
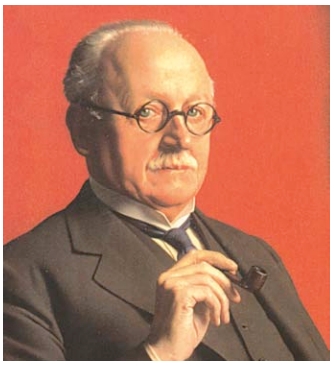
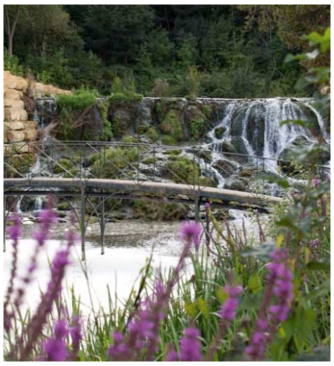
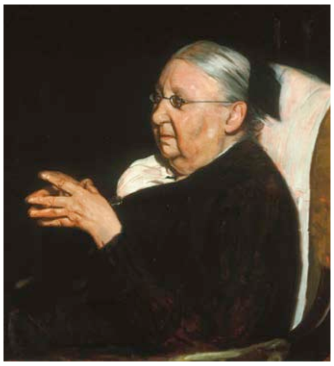






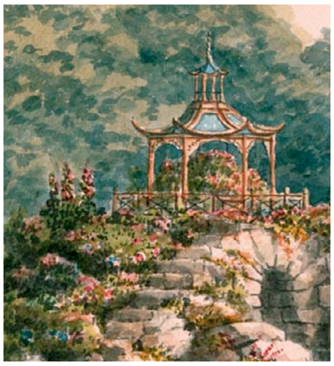
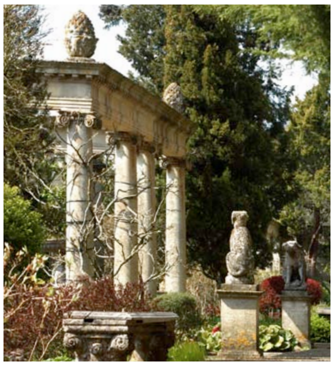
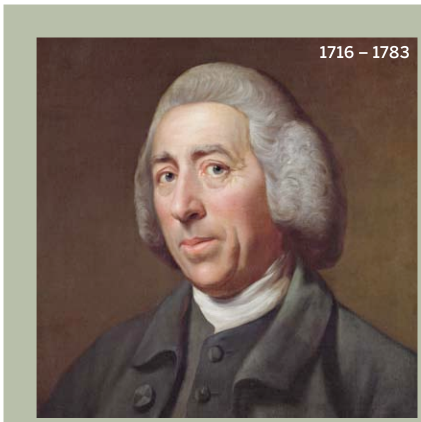


ILLUSTRATION FROM WOBURN RED BOOK, 1805





LANCELOT BROWN

Capability Brown remains one of the most influential landscape designers in modern history. Described as "England's Greatest Gardener" he was responsible for the design of over 170 parks and gardens, many of which remain in use today. Smooth undulating lines and scatterings of trees typified his art, all in the effort to achieve the presence of the English landscape in it's ideal form. Sophisticated in his approach and at the forefront of fashion in his day, Capability's effect on landscape design is unquestioned.

OXFORDSHIRE, OX20 1PX

BLENHEIM PLACE

Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, is set in over 2,000 acres of 'Capability' Brown landscaped parkland, and Formal Gardens. The splendour and tranquillity of the Park including its Great Lake and Grand Cascade is unrivalled in Britain. Fringed by majestic oaks and maples, there is beauty to be found in all seasons.

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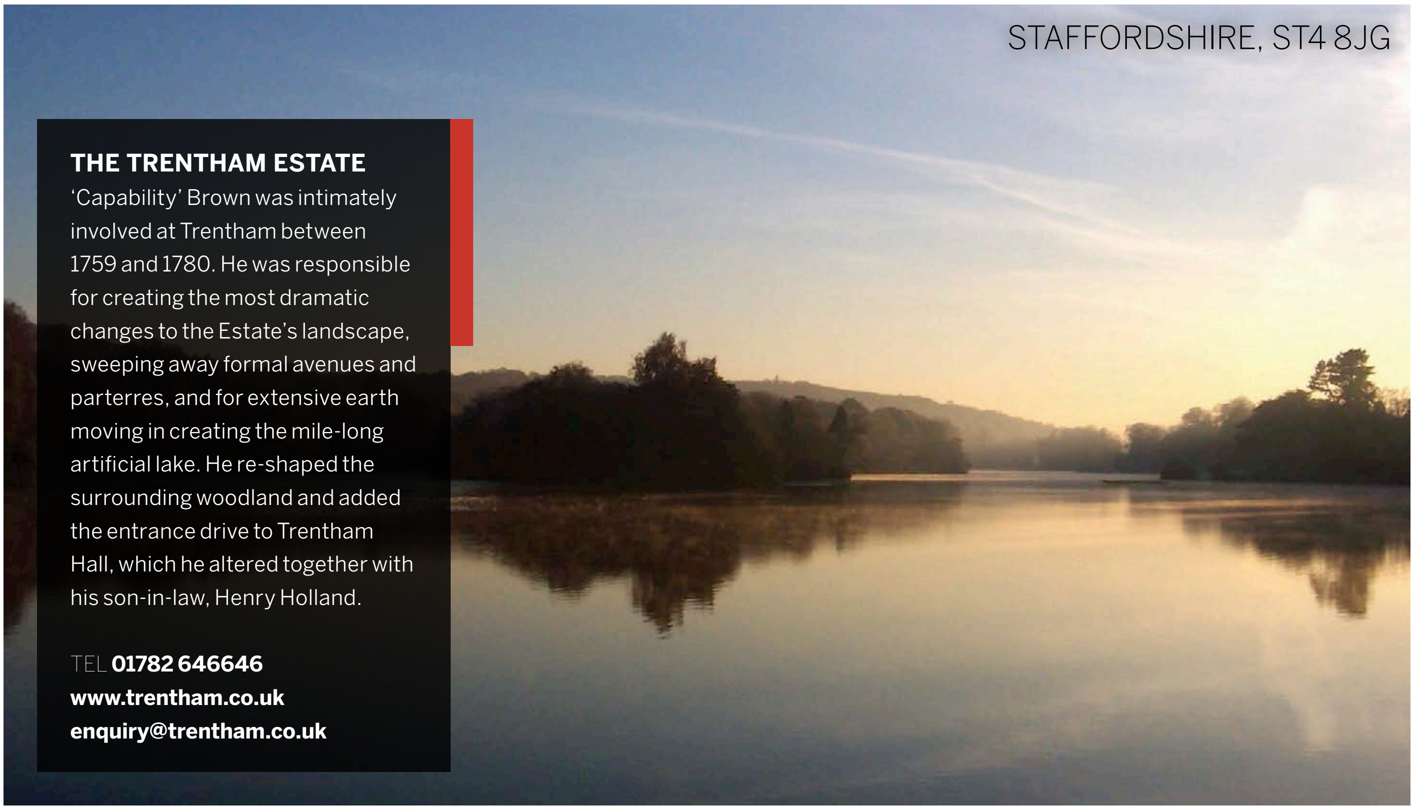

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THE TRENTHAM ESTATE

'Capability' Brown was intimately involved at Trentham between 1759 and 1780. He was responsible for creating the most dramatic changes to the Estate's landscape, sweeping away formal avenues and parterres, and for extensive earth moving in creating the mile-long artificial lake. He re-shaped the surrounding woodland and added the entrance drive to Trentham Hall, which he altered together with his son-in-law, Henry Holland.

TEL **01782 646646**
www.trentham.co.uk
enquiry@trentham.co.uk

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CHARLECOTE PARK

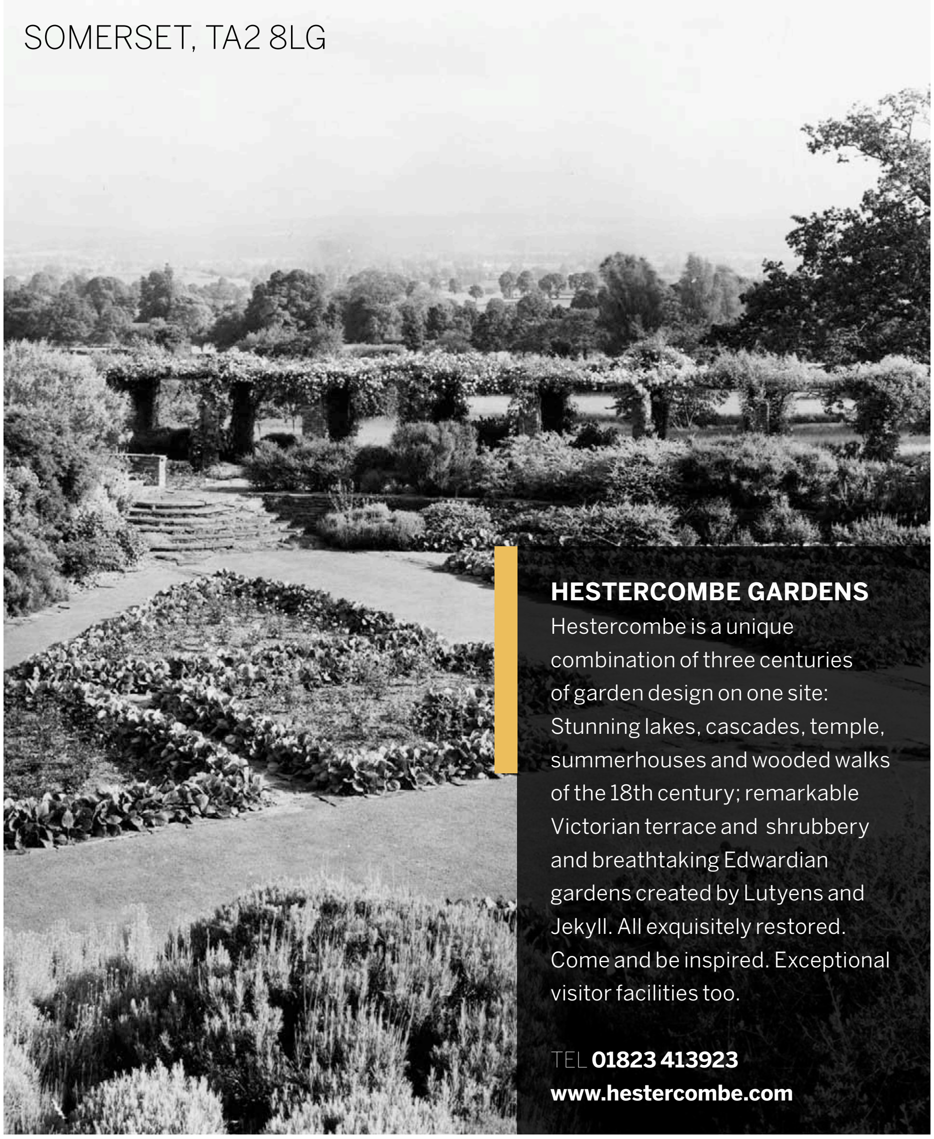
'Capability' Brown first visited Charlecote Park in 1750. Several years later he relayed the banks of the two rivers which flow through the park, and created a new cascade close to the house. There soon followed a ha-ha to contain the deer herd and a raised cedar lawn. Brown's stunning work at Charlecote can still be enjoyed today in all seasons, along with more recent additions like the Woodland Garden and Views Walk - this beautiful National Trust property is open seven days a week throughout the year.

TEL **01789 470277**
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/charlecote

1869 – 1944
1843 – 1932

EDWARD LUTYENS AND GERTRUDE JEKYLL

Edwin Lutyens is often described as the greatest British architect of his age. His materpieces include the Cenotaph in London, New Deli in India and many english country houses including Munstead Wood, home of gifted plantswoman, Gertrude Jekyll. Together with Jekyll, Lutyens designed over a hundred gardens. The combination of his adaptation of traditional architectural styles together with her unique planting plans makes them an exceptional duo. Hestercombe Gardens represents the peak of their partnership.



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Hestercombe is a unique combination of three centuries of garden design on one site: Stunning lakes, cascades, temple, summerhouses and wooded walks of the 18th century; remarkable Victorian terrace and shrubbery and breathtaking Edwardian gardens created by Lutyens and Jekyll. All exquisitely restored. Come and be inspired. Exceptional visitor facilities too.

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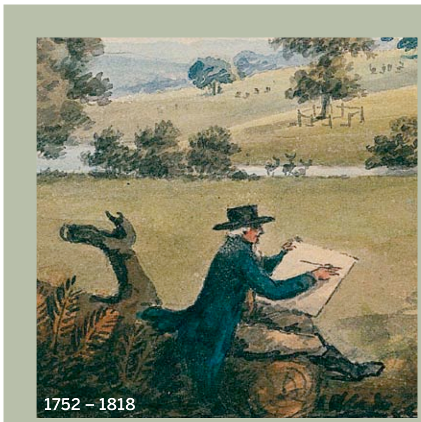
WOBURN ABBEY AND GARDENS

Repton was commissioned to enhance the gardens and parkland at Woburn in 1802 and later wrote that his designs here *'have nowhere been so fully realised'*. Centuries later Repton's ideas continue to delight visitors with the recreation of features including the Pavilion, Children's Garden and, later this year, the Cone House.

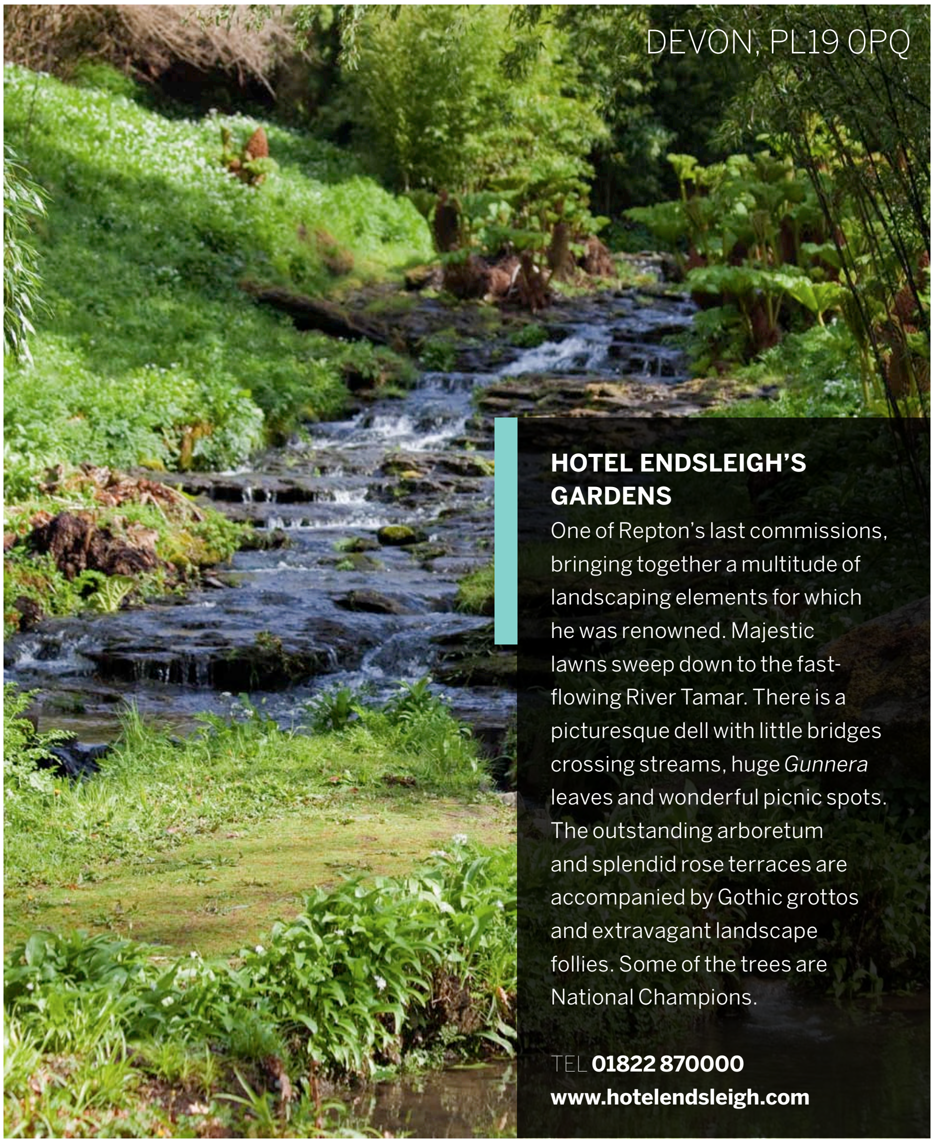
TEL **01525 290333**
www.woburn.co.uk/abbey
admissions@woburn.co.uk



1752 – 1818

HUMPHRY REPTON

Often credited with coining the very term 'landscape gardener' and the natural successor to Lancelot Capability Brown, Repton is also regarded as one of finest landscape designers of the 18th century. From his initial Brown influence, Repton then moved to develop his own style and approach to landscape design, often re-introducing formal settings for the houses he worked for in a more picturesque manner. A great illustrator and planner, his work is said to foreshadow many important 19th century developments.



DEVON, PL19 0PQ

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One of Repton's last commissions, bringing together a multitude of landscaping elements for which he was renowned. Majestic lawns sweep down to the fast-flowing River Tamar. There is a picturesque dell with little bridges crossing streams, huge *Gunnera* leaves and wonderful picnic spots. The outstanding arboretum and splendid rose terraces are accompanied by Gothic grottos and extravagant landscape follies. Some of the trees are National Champions.

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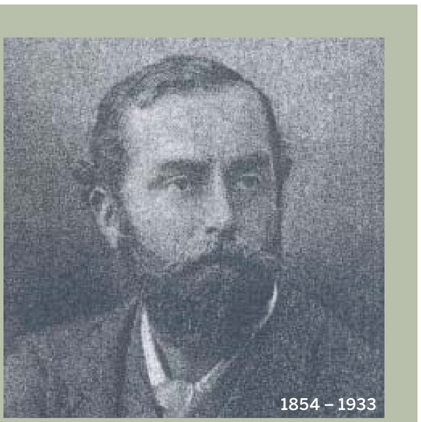
IMAGE COURTESY OF WOBURN ABBEY

BUSCOT PARK

The gardens and pleasure grounds at Buscot Park are one of Oxfordshire's best-kept secrets. Designed in the late 18th century to complement the Palladian style house, the grounds were considerably enhanced in the 20th century by the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Lords Faringdon. They include the spectacular water garden designed by Harold Peto and the Four Seasons Walled Garden. Open 29 March – 30 September 2013. Gardens open Monday-Friday 2-6pm and some weekends including Bank Holidays.

TEL **01367 240932**
www.buscotpark.com
info@buscot-park.com

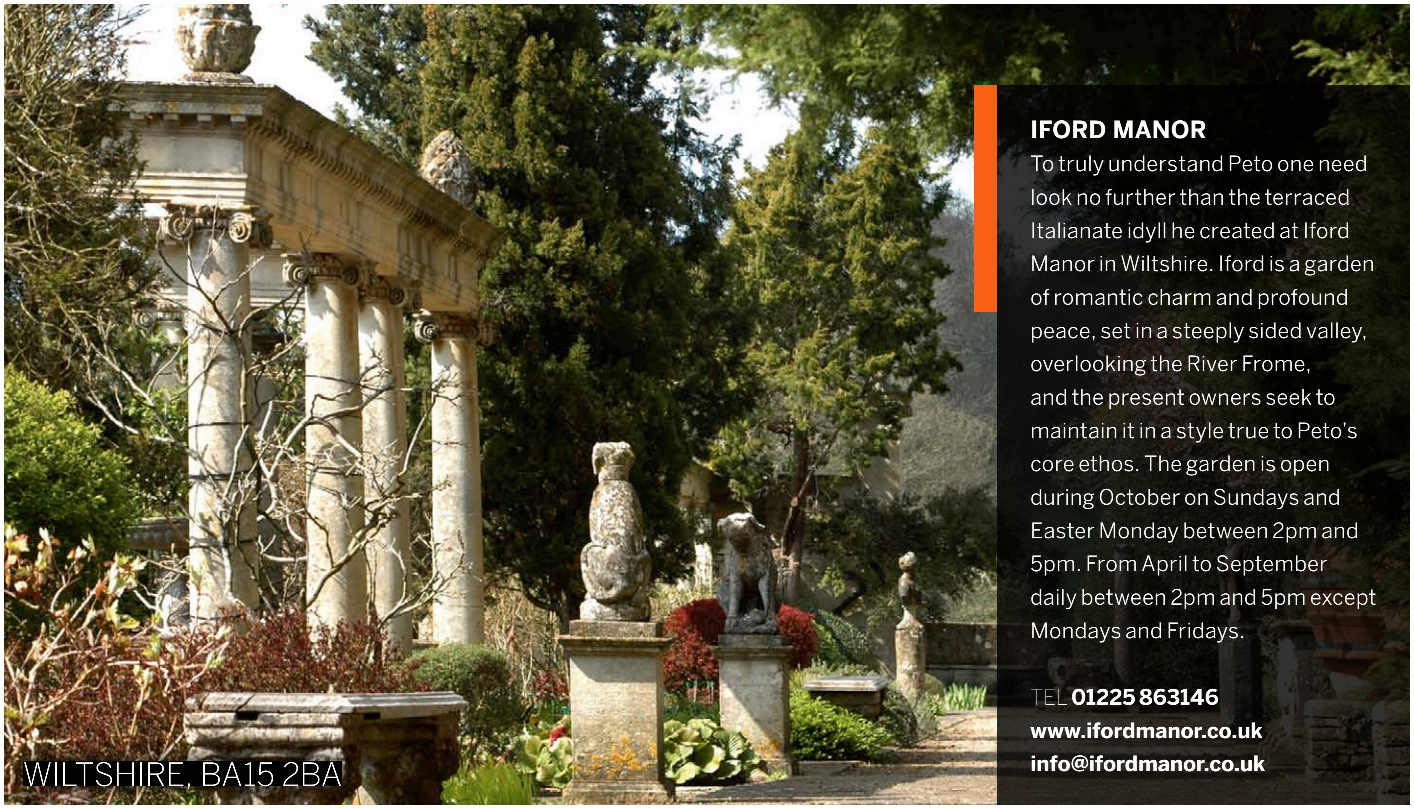
OXFORDSHIRE, SN7 8BU



1854 – 1933

HAROLD PETO

Harold Peto began his design career first by training and qualifying as an architect, eventually turning to interior and garden design. His highly regarded works are known for their deep Italian renaissance influence, and the delicate marriage of object and nature. Enthused by the Arts and Crafts movement of the day, Peto also created some of the finest Italianate gardens in England, Ireland and the French Riviera. He purchased and moved to Iford Manor in 1899, the pre-cursor and groundwork behind many of his major commissions.

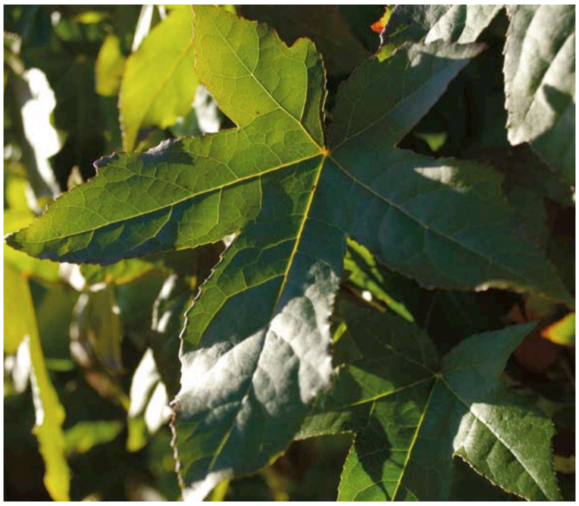


WILTSHIRE, BA15 2BA

IFORD MANOR

To truly understand Peto one need look no further than the terraced Italianate idyll he created at Iford Manor in Wiltshire. Iford is a garden of romantic charm and profound peace, set in a steeply sided valley, overlooking the River Frome, and the present owners seek to maintain it in a style true to Peto's core ethos. The garden is open during October on Sundays and Easter Monday between 2pm and 5pm. From April to September daily between 2pm and 5pm except Mondays and Fridays.

TEL **01225 863146**
www.ifordmanor.co.uk
info@ifordmanor.co.uk



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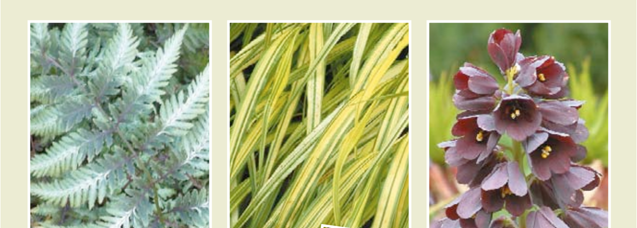

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design

Latest design news, design solutions, design sourcebook

Mix and match

In her new book *The Natural Garden* award-winning designer Xanthe White shows how to combine native New Zealand plants, such as one of her personal favourites the plume grass *Chionochloa flavicans*, and evergreen *Muehlenbeckia*, with perennials familiar to UK gardens, to create naturalistic looking planting schemes that offer layers of texture, colour and form. *The Natural Garden* is published by Random House Godwit.

SALLY TAGG / RANDOM HOUSE NEW ZEALAND

Natural Reflections by Alison Coxhead
one of the 2012 competition winners

Jacksons Show Gardens Design Competition 2013 register your interest…

Following the success of the previous three years show gardens project, Jacksons are pleased to announce, the popular design competition aimed at garden designers and landscape architects, will run for a fourth year. The competition has attracted attention from many in the industry who would like their design brought to life at the fencing company's HQ in Kent, and with two previous year's winners going on to achieve subsequent success as RHS Gold medal winners, this could be interpreted as a sign that the Jacksons project is a 'hotbed' of burgeoning talent.

The project will be run along the similar lines to the previous years, but with a slightly changed format to keep it fresh, with some distinctly different design challenges. Budget for the show gardens will come from Jacksons: fencing materials and garden structures will be supplied by Jacksons. There is scope within the scheme for original designs for furniture and structures to the designer's specification to be made from Jacksons materials. Partner suppliers will supply hard landscaping materials, plants and other objects.

To find out more and see the previous year's show gardens log on to: **jacksons-fencing.co.uk/show-gardens**

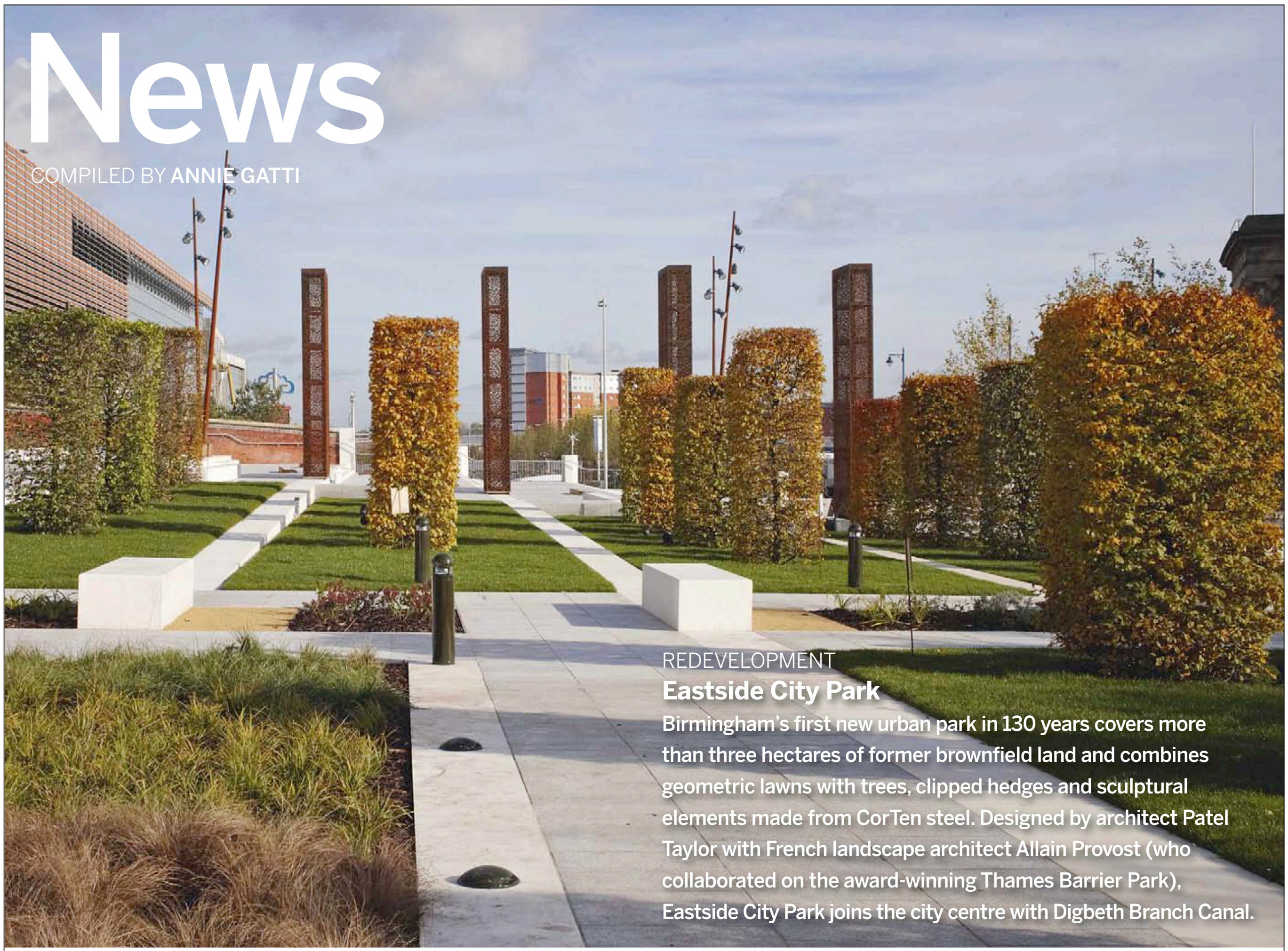
To register your interest, please email: **louise.tomlin@jacksons-fencing.co.uk** with your contact details and a brief outline of your credentials. Please state if you are a student and where you are studying. Emails will be responded to in January 2013.

Jacksons Fencing Head Office Stowting Common
Ashford Kent TN25 6BN Tel: 01233 750393

Jacksons

News

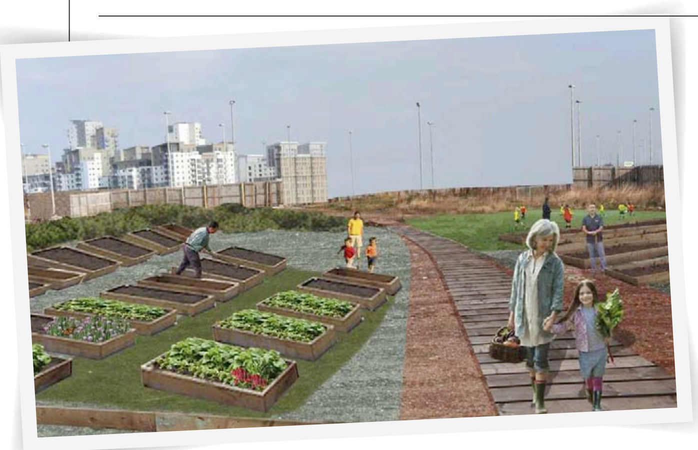
COMPILED BY **ANNIE GATTI**



REDEVELOPMENT

Eastside City Park

Birmingham's first new urban park in 130 years covers more than three hectares of former brownfield land and combines geometric lawns with trees, clipped hedges and sculptural elements made from CorTen steel. Designed by architect Patel Taylor with French landscape architect Allain Provost (who collaborated on the award-winning Thames Barrier Park), Eastside City Park joins the city centre with Digbeth Branch Canal.



ROLE MODELS

Landscape awards

A pilot study in Edinburgh, which identified six key sites in the city that could be used as temporary green spaces for biodiversity and community-related activities – such as growing food and educational visits – has won the Strategic Landscape Planning award at the 2012 Landscape Institute Awards. It was undertaken by the multi-disciplinary team at Optimised Environments Ltd (OPEN) and was commissioned by the Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust. It is hoped that the model will be rolled out to other sites around the city. LDA Design, with Hargreaves Associates, Arup and Atkins, won the President's Award for the London 2012 Olympic Park.

TIMOTHY SOAR

BENCH

This softwood bench, with storage space under the seat, provides elegant seating in the conservatory in winter and is neat enough to be easily moved into the garden in the summer. It measures 1m long, 41cm deep and 89cm high and is offered in Farrow and Ball off-white but can also be painted in a colour of your choice.

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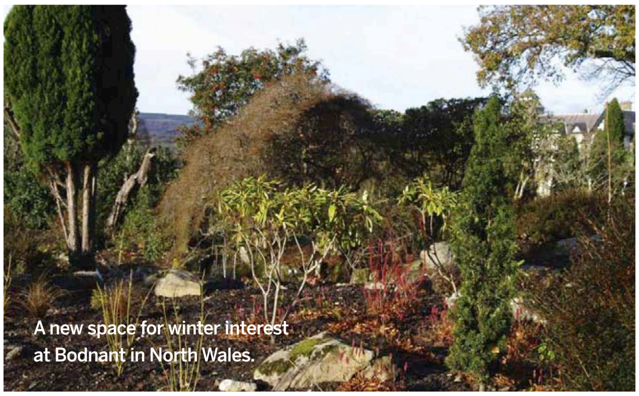
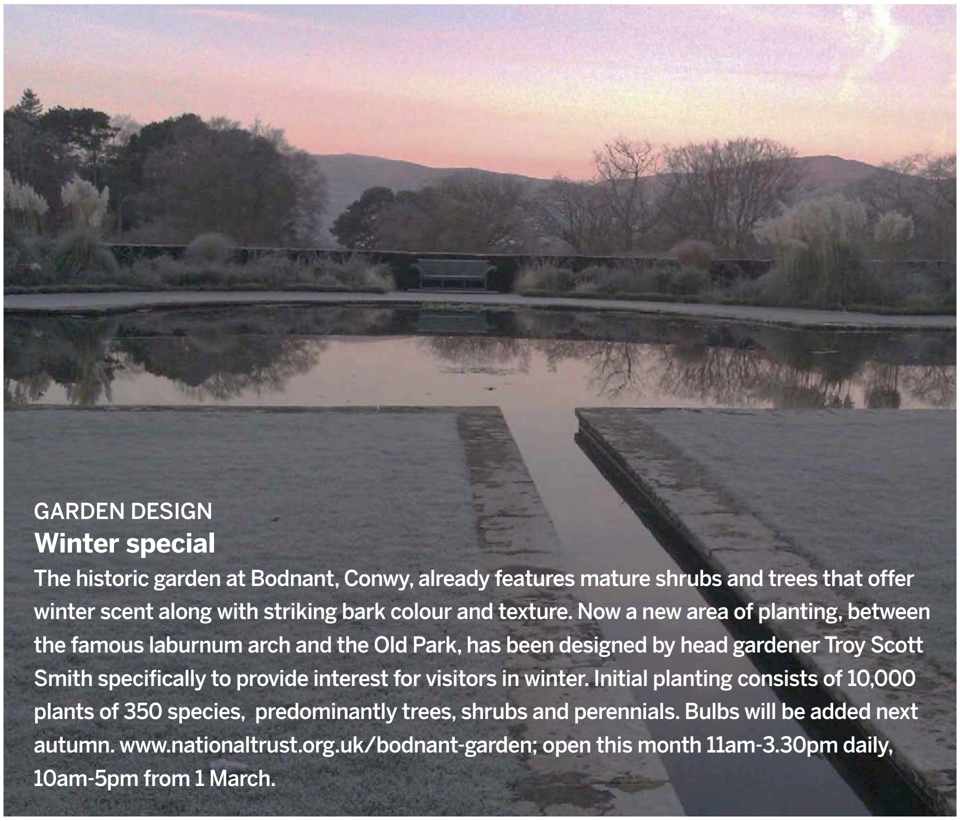


A new space for winter interest at Bodnant in North Wales.

Bodnant's head gardener Troy Scott Smith.



GARDEN DESIGN

Winter special

The historic garden at Bodnant, Conwy, already features mature shrubs and trees that offer winter scent along with striking bark colour and texture. Now a new area of planting, between the famous laburnum arch and the Old Park, has been designed by head gardener Troy Scott Smith specifically to provide interest for visitors in winter. Initial planting consists of 10,000 plants of 350 species, predominantly trees, shrubs and perennials. Bulbs will be added next autumn. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/bodnant-garden; open this month 11am-3.30pm daily, 10am-5pm from 1 March.

PRESSURE GROUP

Gardens retained

The controversial plans to replace the sunken Victorian public gardens at Union Terrace in Aberdeen with a privately developed £140 million contemporary scheme by architects Diller Scofidio and Renfro Keppie Designs have been rejected by Aberdeen City Council in favour of improvements to the gardens and to landmark buildings. A campaign group, The Friends of Union Terrace (www.friendsofutg.co.uk), has fought vigorously for the retention of the gardens, which include seven ancient elm trees.

RESTORATION

Swiss Garden

A Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £2.8m will allow the restoration of a rare Regency park in Bedfordshire to take place this year. The Swiss Garden in Old Warden Park was created in the 1820s by Lord Ongley and bought by industrialist Joseph Shuttleworth in the 1870s. The main focal point of the garden is the pillar and thatch cottage with its interior decoration of bark and fir cones.

Notebook

- **Dutch landscape and garden designer Piet Oudolf** will receive a RIBA Honorary Fellowship on 6 February in London for his contribution to architecture in its broadest sense.
- **Victoria Park in East London** has been voted the nation's favourite park in the 2012 People's Choice Award organised by the Green Flag Plus Partnership.
- **Book now for Ecobuild 2013**, the three-day exhibition of sustainable design at ExCel, London, 5-7 March. There are daily demonstrations of techniques such as straw bale construction, rammed earth and lime rendering. www.ecobuild.co.uk
- **The Landscape Institute** has released a series of short films on YouTube that explains the thinking behind the design of the 2012 Olympic Park and its transformation from a brownfield site to what the LI regards as Europe's most significant landscape project for a generation. www.youtube.com/user/landscapeinstituteuk
- **Landscape designers Andrew Grant**, who designed the award-winning Gardens by the Bay in Singapore, and Dan Pearson, whose landscaping of the Tokachi Millennium Forest in northern Japan won the Grand Award at the 2012 Society of Garden Designers Awards, have been made Royal Designers for Industry. They join Kim Wilkie who became an RDI in 2009.

BODNANT IMAGES: ANN SMITH / ROSE JAMES / MELISSA MABBETT / ALL NATIONAL TRUST

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Creativity vs problem solving

Welcome to our new series, in which expert Annie Guilfoyle looks at garden design problems. She starts by giving a few practical ideas to get us thinking creatively about solutions to common conundrums

WORDS ANNIE GUILFOYLE

Annie Guilfoyle is Director of Garden Design at KLC School of Design. She is also Garden Course Coordinator at West Dean College and runs her own garden design studio. "My clients and their gardens are very diverse. Ranging from tiny urban courtyards to large rural estates, they offer a wide variety of challenges. There is something to learn and discover on every project."

We expect so much from our outdoor spaces, whether it is a bijou balcony or several acres. The garden needs to be all things to all people, catering to our increasingly busy lives and active families. The demands on the garden as a place for recreation, relaxation and food production can make the design process far more of a challenge than you might imagine.

The inspiration for this forthcoming series comes largely from my own design practice. When discussing the project brief with clients there are a number of requests that appear time after time. Almost without exception they will ask for 'colour all year round' closely followed by 'must be low maintenance'. Right up there on the wish list is 'increase screening and privacy' and 'please make my small garden seem larger'.

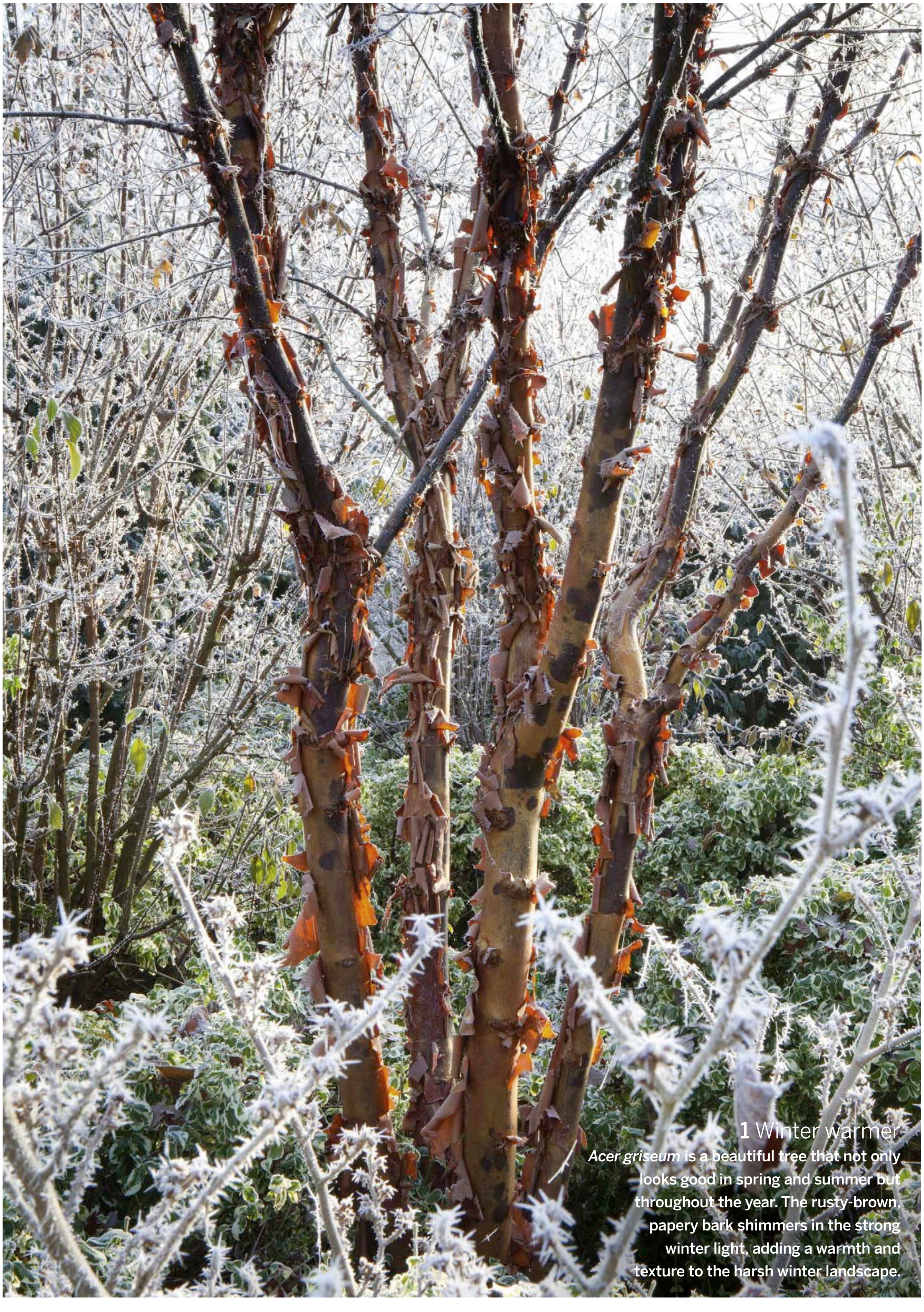
Problem solving frequently represents a large proportion of a design project and it would be unrealistic to say otherwise. I have seen garden design students become disillusioned when faced with a lengthy list of practical issues to overcome. Where to position the ubiquitous (and unsightly) trampoline? How best to hide the bins? Is it possible to screen the garden but still maintain the views? Can you fit a home office into a small garden and still have enough space for everything else on the list? Creativity may start to dwindle at this point and it's very easy to lose heart.

I prefer to turn this situation on its head, firmly believing that really innovative designs can result from finding clever solutions to awkward problems. In my experience the most satisfying projects have often been the ones with the toughest challenges.

In this series, I will focus not only on the everyday design issues but also include a few of the more unusual topics. From making a small garden feel larger and disguising an awkwardly shaped plot, to working with a steeply sloping site and linking a house and garden. I will explain how to use plants effectively in key situations, such as planning a low-maintenance garden, achieving colour throughout the year, coping with an ever-changing climate and how to manage a waterlogged garden.

If designing your garden seems daunting, don't despair. Whether you are starting from scratch or making minor adjustments to an existing garden, practical advice will be mixed with suggestions of where to look for inspiration. From gardens and nurseries to suppliers and makers, there will be plenty of tips on how to find what you are looking for. □

NEXT MONTH Year-round colour in the garden.



1 Winter warmer

Acer griseum is a beautiful tree that not only looks good in spring and summer but throughout the year. The rusty-brown, papery bark shimmers in the strong winter light, adding a warmth and texture to the harsh winter landscape.

MARIANNE MAJERUS

2 Hedging

Screening is often a vital component in the garden but sometimes it's not necessary to have a solid hedge. At RHS Garden Rosemoor, *Lonicera nitida* forms the lower level of a hedge and pleached *Carpinus betulus* grows through it. An enticing gap offers a glimpse through to the next garden.

3 Adding intrigue

In this Hove garden we have positioned a beautiful handmade gate with a meandering path on the other side, which actually leads to nowhere. This technique can make a small garden appear larger by suggesting that there is another area to discover.

4 Home studio

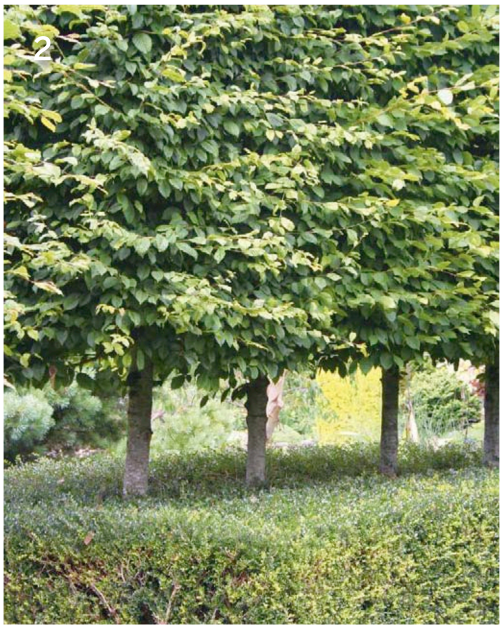
Giving up a section of my own small garden to build a design studio was a tough decision. However, I don't regret it as I now use my garden much more, walking to and from the studio. It also allows me to view the garden from a new angle.

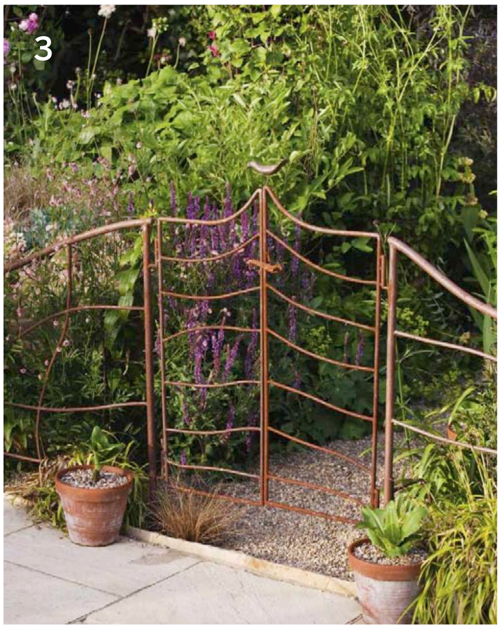
5 Focal points

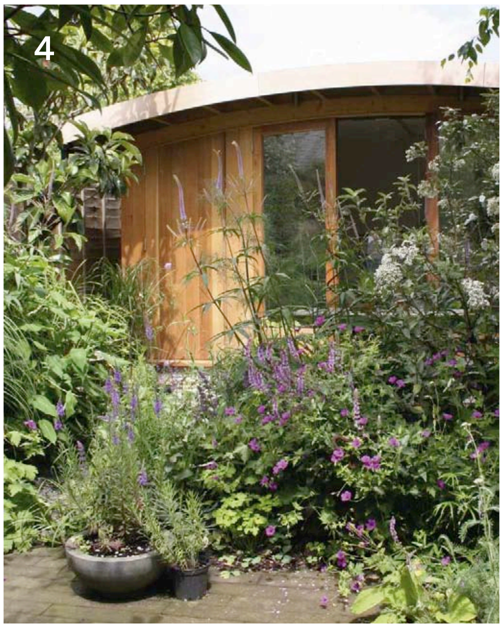
There are various ways of adding colour and interest to a garden; one of them is in the form of art and sculpture. This mosaic-covered urn was made by a client for her own garden. Making your own garden feature can be very rewarding.

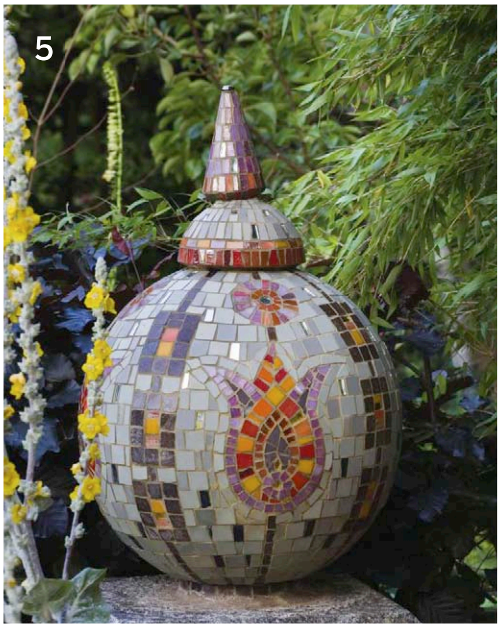
6 Blurring the boundaries

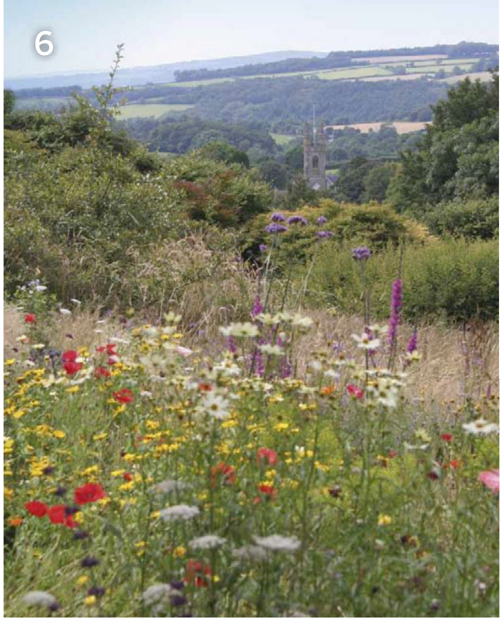
Linking the garden and landscape has been practised for centuries; even so it is still a very effective way of making the garden feel larger. This striking view from The Garden House in Devon includes the village church and the moors beyond, reinforcing the sense of place.

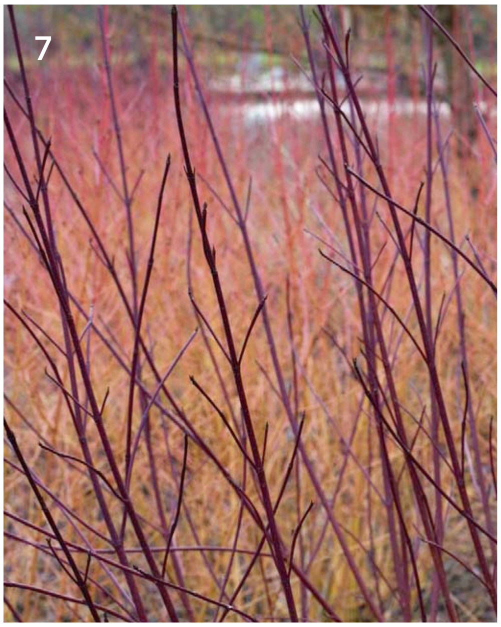




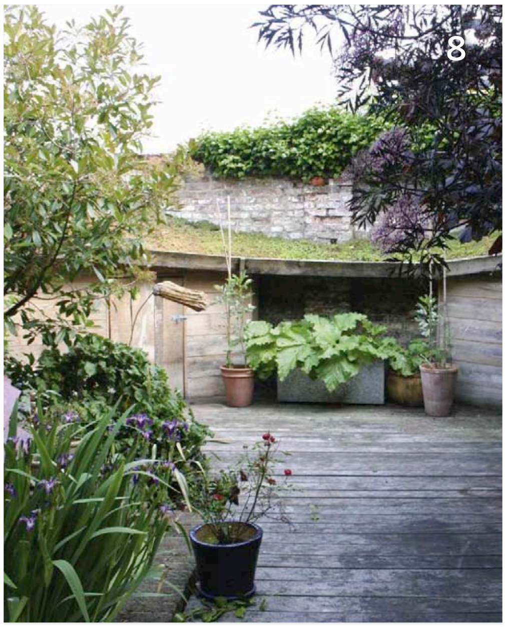








3&5 CLIVE NICHOLS, 7 MARIANNE MAJERUS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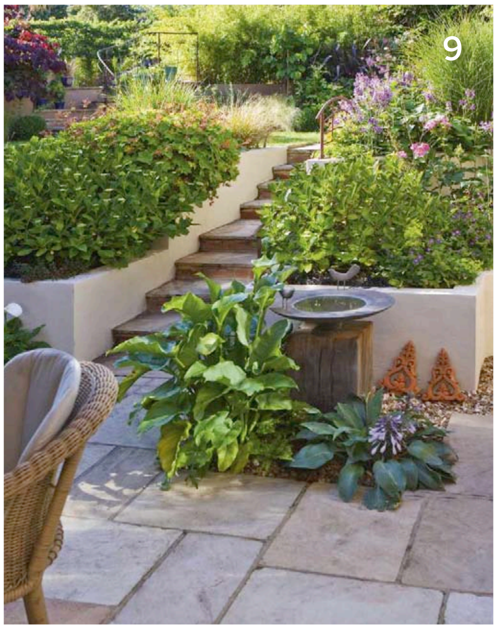
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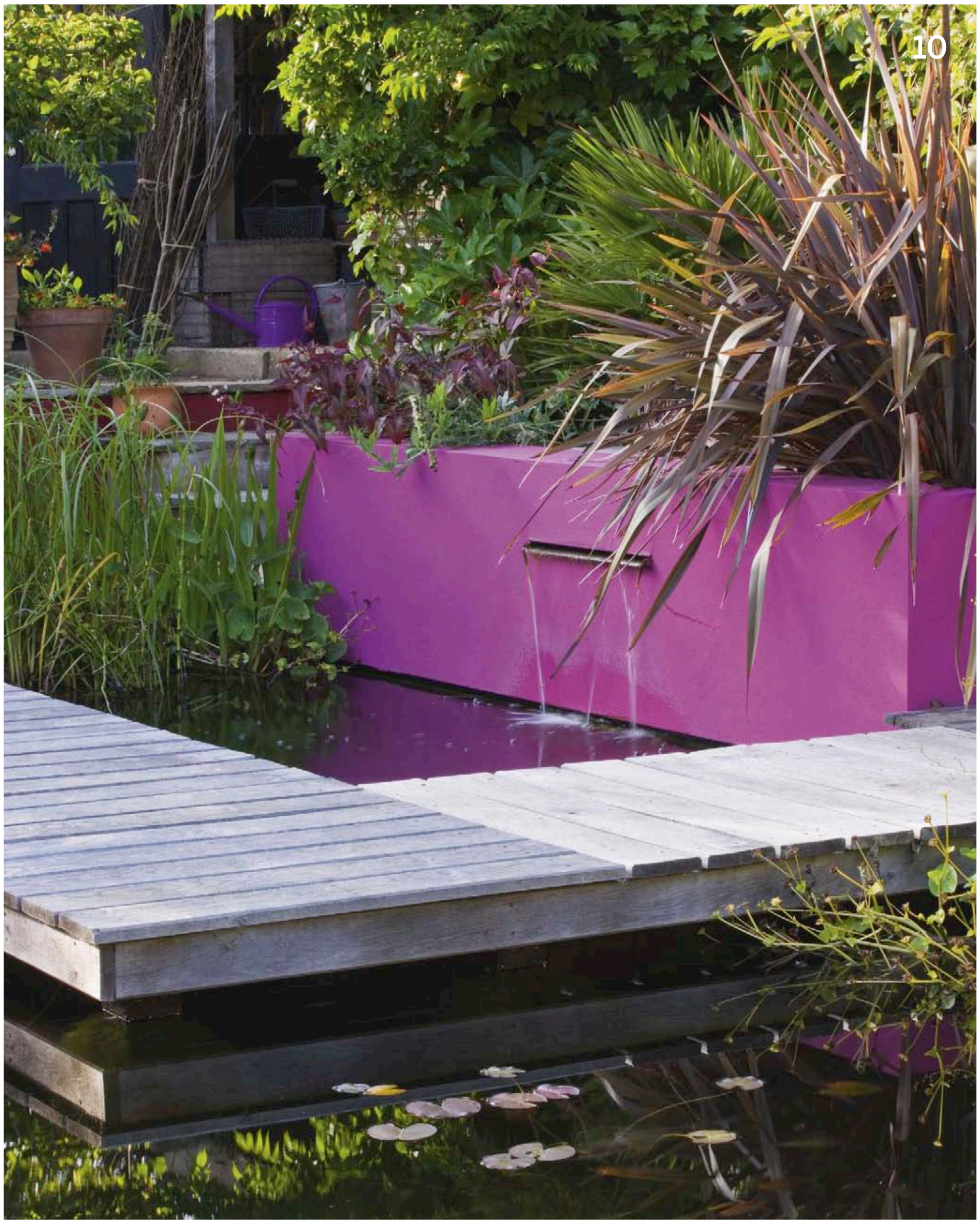
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9 & 10 CLIVE NICHOLS

7 Winter colour

January can be such a bleak month, so for inspiration visit gardens such as the RHS gardens at Wisley. Here richly coloured *Cornus alba* 'Ruby' is planted alongside *Cornus sanguinea* 'Midwinter Fire', using the stems for interest and demonstrating that winter can be bright and colourful.

8 Storage solutions

As with houses, gardens can never have enough storage space. In the Zimmer Stewart Gallery in Arundel, we have built attractive stowaway storage cupboards that nestle into the corners of the garden. The sloping sedum roof drains any excess water into a galvanised trough planted with rhubarb.

9 Sloping gardens

Steeply sloping sites can make really interesting gardens, offering the possibility for each level to become a separate space. In this garden I have deliberately set the steps at an angle between raised beds, hiding them from view and softening the overall effect.

10 New features from old

Sometimes the answer is obvious; rather than fill in an unwanted swimming pool we transformed it into a large pond, with decking walkways, exotic plants and lots of fish. A pool that was used only occasionally is a now place to relax and is used far more.

Education Guide...

Are you looking to change career, gain accreditation or simply learn a new skill? If so, choose from this selection of Horticultural and Garden Design courses available to help achieve your 2013 goals.

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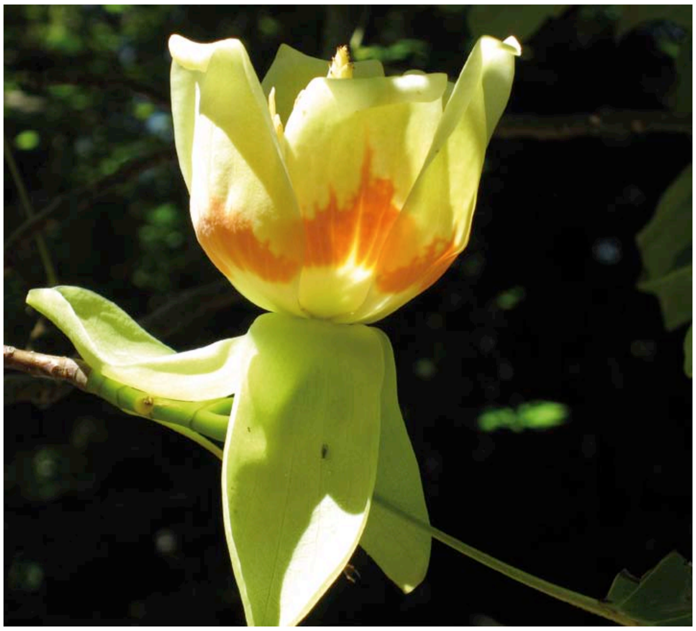

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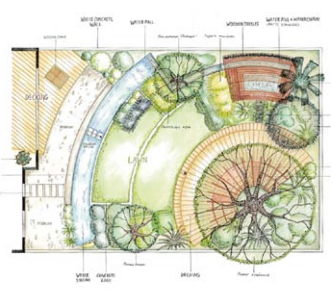

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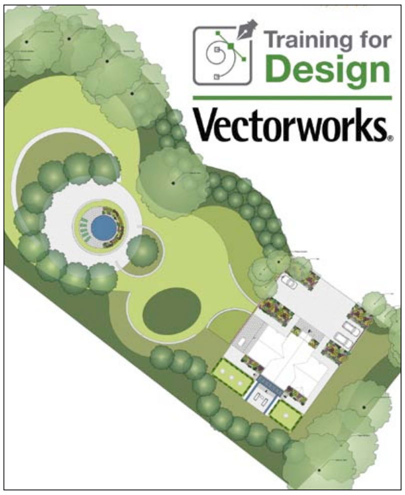
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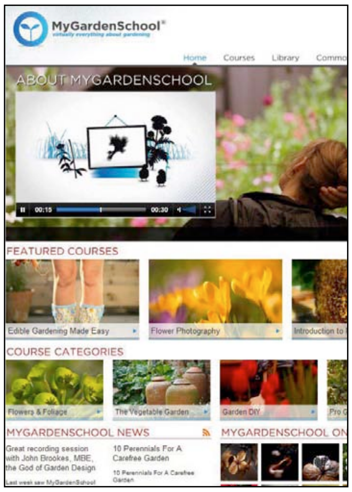
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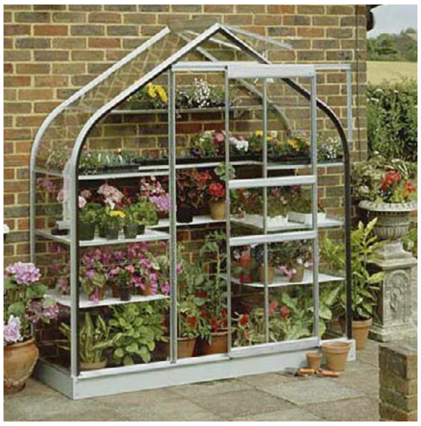

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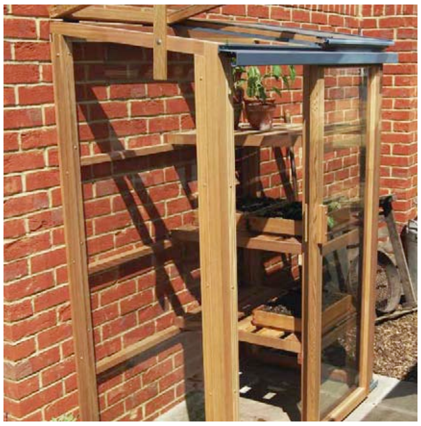

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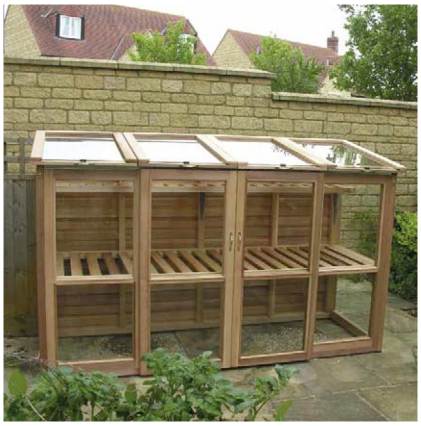

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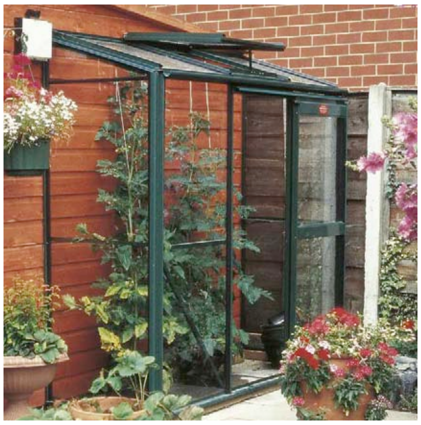

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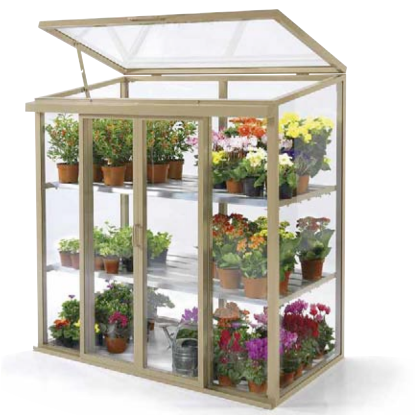

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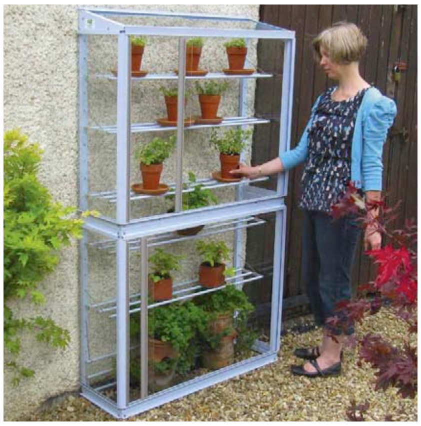

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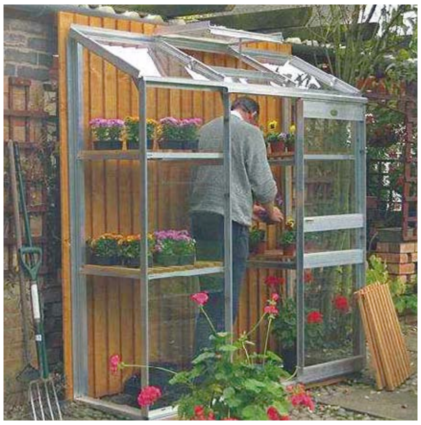

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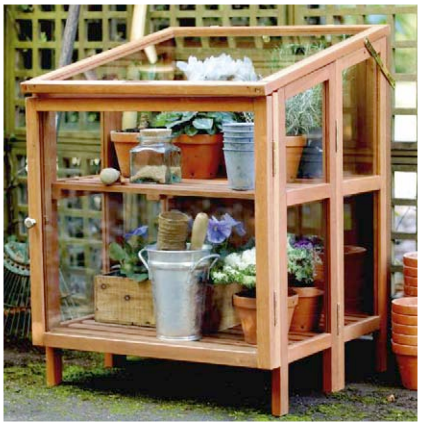

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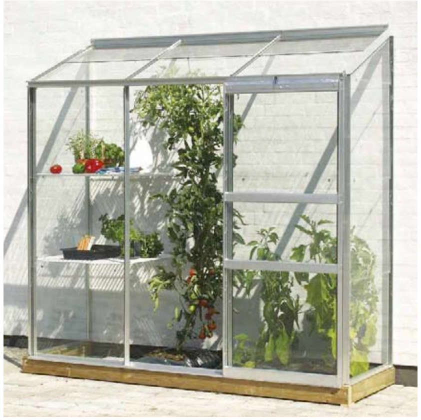

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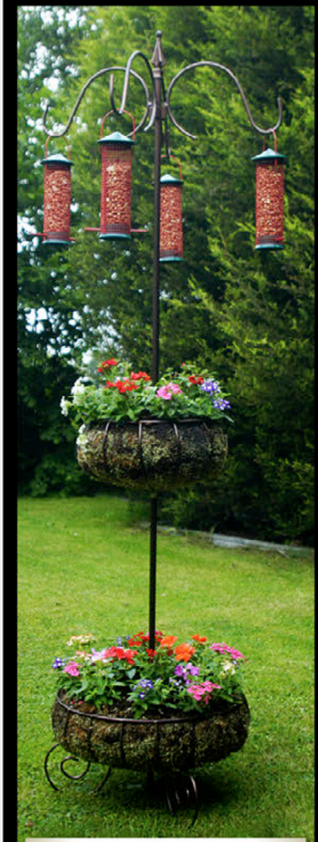

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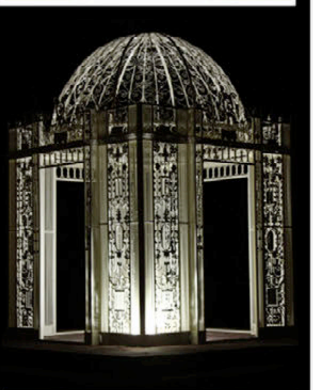

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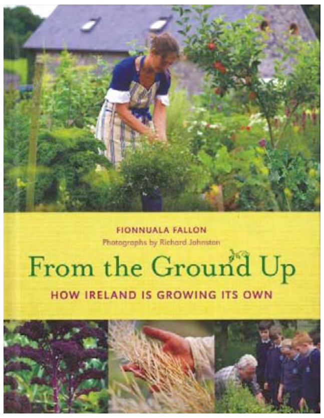
Book reviews, reader letters, crossword and reader offers

A Gardener's Guide to Bulbs by Christine Skelmersdale is reviewed on page 108.

Book reviews

FROM THE GROUND UP: HOW IRELAND IS GROWING ITS OWN

by Fionnuala Fallon
Collins Press, £22.99
ISBN 978-1848891272


FIONNUALA FALLON
Photographs by Richard Johnston
From the Ground Up
HOW IRELAND IS GROWING ITS OWN

For the last decade or so, Ireland has been experiencing a food-growing revolution. Crops are sown and harvested in back gardens and school yards, in allotments and community plots, and on balconies and windowsills. *Irish Times* garden writer Fionnuala Fallon's book visits 16 different growing operations: five in Dublin and the rest spread around the country. Some are run by old hands (such as Joy Larkcom and Don Pollard on their windblown half-acre in west Cork), others by very young ones – such as the pupils at Holy Trinity Senior National School in northeast Dublin.

The pieces are as much about why the people grow their own food as about what they are raising and how they are doing it. Righteous ideas of sovereignty, self sufficiency, education and future resilience occur again and again. But so also does the inarguable fact that fresh produce picked moments earlier is bouncing with flavour and scent, and that growing your own food also grows optimism and wellbeing.

PIONEER
PIONEER

Irish market gardener Jim Cronin works the land with two Percheron horses.

The author's choice of growers is subjective. She chooses not to include some of the better-known enterprises such as the Organic Centre in County Leitrim, the Irish Seed Savers Association in County Clare, and Glebe Gardens in west Cork, but she does introduce the reader to other inspiring characters.

We learn, for instance, that Trevor Sargent, Green politician and former party leader, whose garden measures just 126 square metres, has organic certification – from two bodies. And we read with envy and awe how Jim Cronin works his 14-acre holding in County Clare with his two gentle and intelligent Percheron horses. Teenaged twins, Micheál and Oisín Byrne from County Louth, share information on how to grow prizewinning giant pumpkins in Ireland (good seed and soil, a polytunnel, and up to 200 litres of water per day are required).

This is a book that will interest those who are serious about growing their own food, leading them on an illuminating and uplifting journey around Ireland. The photographs, by Richard Johnston (the author's husband) are expertly taken and nicely reproduced. He appears not to use a wide lens, so his pictures have an intimate, confiding quality.

Jane Powers is a freelance garden writer and photographer

book offer

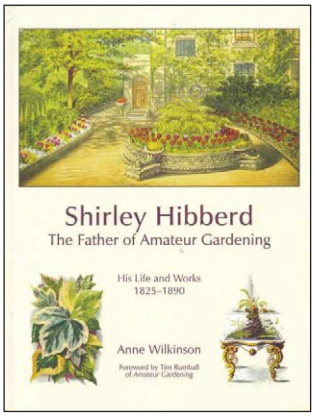
RRP £22.99. **Reader offer price £21.99** including p&p.

SHIRLEY HIBBERD: THE FATHER OF AMATEUR GARDENING

by Anne Wilkinson

Cortex Design, £32

ISBN 978-0956809605


Shirley Hibberd
The Father of Amateur Gardening
His Life and Works
1825–1890
Anne Wilkinson
Foreword by Tim Rumball of Amateur Gardening

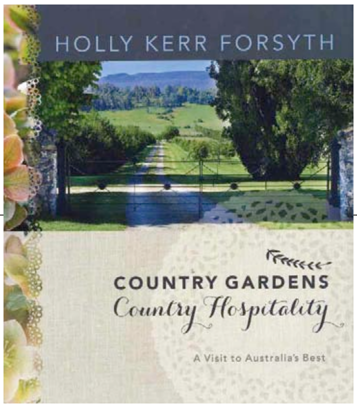
James Shirley Hibberd had an insatiable curiosity for the natural world, particularly gardening, foreseeing value in promoting his newfound knowledge and expertise to the emerging Victorian middle classes through a series of iconic books and magazines. Although his books endure via digital reprints and the richly illustrated originals prized by collectors, many aspects of the personal life of this once renowned author, editor and lecturer are little known. A decade of diligent research has enabled garden historian Anne Wilkinson to piece together his life and times, embedding it among profiles of his most influential works.

Although humble beginnings have meant some aspects of his early life remain shrouded in conjecture, Hibberd's enthusiasm for his subject and gift for communication, even though largely self-taught, enabled his reputation to flourish to the point that at his death in 1890 he was a nationally celebrated member of the horticultural community and known, through his publications, to thousands of people. Forthright in his beliefs, he had a number of high-profile public quarrels with his rival, William Robinson, whom he felt, rightly, had plagiarised his work.

The author narrates rather than appraises Hibberd's life and output. Passages lifted from his most-noted books allow Hibberd to speak for himself, while the author provides useful insights into the Victorian society and culture that influenced his thinking, additionally supported by critical references at the end of each chapter. The book is illustrated using line drawings and colour artworks from Hibberd's works and others of the time, interspersed with recent images of the parts of London where he lived and worked.

It is hard for us to imagine today that gardening was not embraced by the masses. Books before Hibberd were either aimed at professional gardeners or their employers. Conditions for growing plants were also far from ideal, sunlight was often lacking and leaves soon became covered with soot belched from chimneys. The new aspirant middle classes knew nothing of gardening. Hibberd helped change that, and this much-needed work is a timely celebration of a visionary whose contribution is just as relevant today as it was in Victorian Britain.

Ian Hodgson is a garden writer, editor and horticultural consultant



COUNTRY GARDENS, COUNTRY HOSPITALITY

by Holly Kerr Forsyth

The Miegunyah Press, £45.95

ISBN 978-0522861051

Country Australia has always prided itself on its hospitality. Throughout the 19th Century, any swagman (homeless wanderer) to knock on a homestead kitchen door was guaranteed a meal. I doubt, however, if any of them were dished up duck confit with white polenta, Old Wesleydale's warm chicken salad or any of the other mouthwatering recipes that pepper this book about the gardens attached to 27 sprawling Australian country properties.

And sprawl they do, being aware of the scale necessary to make any sense among distant horizons. There's an arms-spread-wide generosity that emerges from every image – a sense of space to waste that runs deep in the Australian psyche.

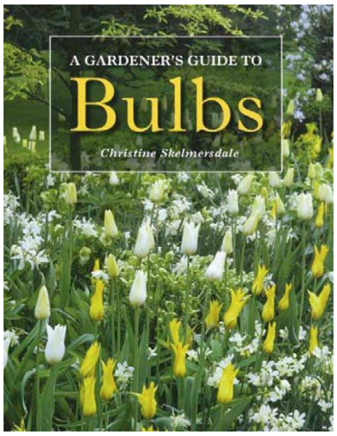
Most illustrated books about gardens leave us feeling as if the gardens are uninhabited. This one does not. While it contains excellent descriptions and sumptuous photographs of the mostly traditional gardens themselves, along with tried and true recipes from the kitchens attached, the overall impression is of rich and busy lives lived in and around the garden – of indoor and outdoor lives that are inseparable, and mutually nurturing.

Michael McCoy is an Australian designer, author and broadcaster

Book reviews

A GARDENER'S GUIDE TO BULBS

by Christine Skelmersdale
The Crowood Press Ltd, £25
ISBN 978-1847973764



Do we need another book about bulbs? That's what immediately crossed my mind when I picked up this title by Christine Skelmersdale. I mean, it's hardly uncharted territory. Walk into any book shop and you'll find an armful of publications tackling the subject, and there are even six different, well-thumbed books on my bookshelf.

So, will *A Gardener's Guide to Bulbs* be joining them? The answer has to be, yes. This lavish guide is a cut above most others on the market. As the owner of Broadleigh Gardens in Somerset, Skelmersdale knows more about bulbs than most. She has been growing and selling them for over 40 years, and has influenced countless gardeners with her gold medal-winning displays at RHS flower shows.

The book is easy to navigate. There are four chapters, covering autumn, winter, spring and summer bulbs, sandwiched between an introduction (this covers planting, combinations and maintenance) and an at-a-glance planting table – this goes into great detail, with planting depths, spacing and a suggestion of bulbs for specific places, such as shady borders, sun, grass and in the dry shade of a wall.

Seventy different types of true bulb and other plants possessing underground storage systems (corms, tubers and rhizomes) are covered, along with masses of species and cultivars. As you'd expect, large chunks are given over to the 'big boys' – tulips, alliums, daffodils and lilies – but expect a few surprises. Included here, are some geraniums grown from 'strange knobbly tubers' and *Bongardia*, a spring flowering plant that's related to *Berberis*.

Skelmersdale hasn't set out to create an encyclopedia and clued-up bulb lovers are bound to find a few omissions – one of my favourite winter aconites, 'Thor', is among them. That's fair enough – this book is a personal selection of those she considers the best or most interesting.

The descriptions are vivid and the text littered with amusing anecdotes. I was particularly tickled by Skelmersdale recollection of an encounter with a little girl at a flower show. The youngster was so taken with a display of *Eucomis* that she sniffed a flower and declared that the smell was similar to the odour of her brother's bedroom.

Martyn Cox is a garden writer, columnist and author

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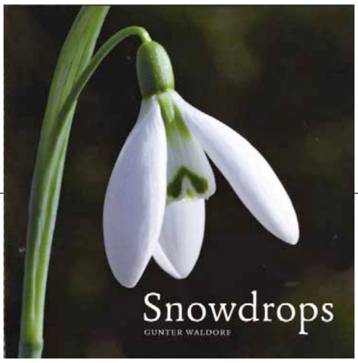

SNOWDROPS

by Gunter Waldorf
Frances Lincoln, £14.99
ISBN 978-0711233850

This little book by the German galanthophile Gunter Waldorf is a real treat. Gunter, who sadly died in 2012, was well-known in Britain as the organiser of the main German snowdrop event.

Page after page of his stunning photographs provide a visual feast for the eyes. Short descriptions accompany each, sometimes with brief notes about where the snowdrop came from.

The clear-cut descriptions of 18 species are completely untainted by complex botanical terms that force most of us to reach for the glossary. As a result gardeners will find his descriptions easy to digest, something that cannot be said of every snowdrop text!

I commend the common sense advice given about growing snowdrops in the garden. Gunter also recommends using plastic baskets, like those for pond plants, for rarities so that you can find them again and protect them from spade damage, voles and moles. Finally, there is excellent advice about feeding them and giving them the best chance to proliferate. I thoroughly recommend this charming book.

Val Bourne is an award-winning writer, photographer and lecturer

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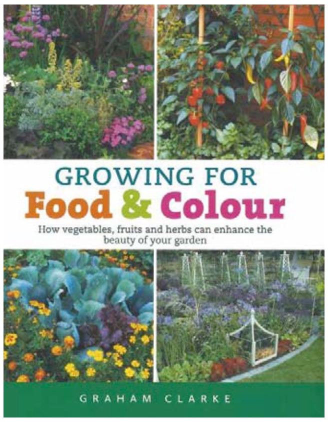
GROWING FOR FOOD & COLOUR

by Graham Clarke
Robert Hale Ltd, £19.99
ISBN 978-0709098454


GROWING FOR
Food & Colour
How vegetables, fruits and herbs can enhance the beauty of your garden
GRAHAM CLARKE

This book is a one-shop stop for ornamental vegetable growing. There's everything in here a beginner might need. It's divided into three parts: Where to Grow your Crops, How to Grow your Crops and Crops with Colour and Interest.

The first part is largely concerned with design and covers everywhere from larger suburban gardens to pots and patios. It might be better aimed at those with gardens than courtyards, though the container section does deal with vegetables and fruit in pots.

The second part is detailed and thorough. There's good advice on how long to store seeds, what F1 hybrids are, how to prepare and sow, and a guide to pricking out.

It's not all about establishing a garden and there's a chapter on looking after both perennial and annuals crops. Again, it mixes the best of latest technologies with solid old-fashioned advice.

The pruning chapter rather veers off into ornamentals, with advice on removing fading flowers from rhododendrons and cutting back perennials, when perhaps a little more about pruning fruit trees might have been useful. Perhaps this just reflects the nature of most people's gardens, where there's a mixture of both productive and ornamental plants.

The problem section relies a little too much on chemical controls for pest and diseases, but does give a voice to both sides.

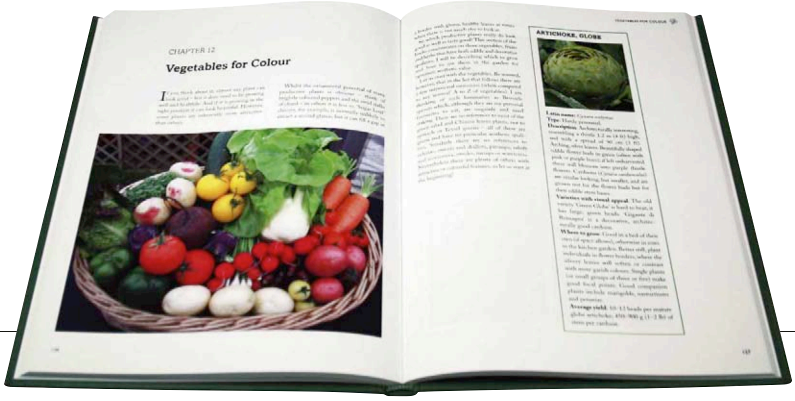
The last part of the book is a directory of vegetables, highlighting cultivars with visual appeal and giving expected yields per plant, which is a nice touch.

Ultimately this is a solid book that a beginner gardener can turn to again and again for good advice. Graham's voice is warm, humorous and authoritative.

Alys Fowler is a Kew-trained gardener, author and presenter

book offer

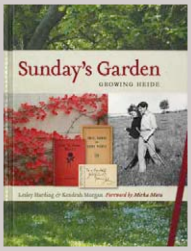
RRP £19.99. **Reader offer price £18.99** including p&p.



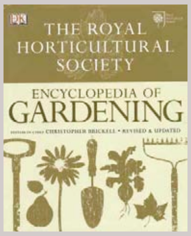
Other recently released books for gardeners

The Little Book of Little Gardens

THE LITTLE BOOK OF LITTLE GARDENS
by Steve Wheen
Dokument Press, £9.99
ISBN 978-9185639540
The work of Steve Wheen, the internationally acclaimed Pot Hole Gardener.



SUNDAY'S GARDEN: GROWING HEIDE
by Lesley Harding and Kendrah Morgan
The Miegunyah Press, £38.95
ISBN 978-0522858761
How one couple made a unique Melbourne parkland.



RHS ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GARDENING
editor Christopher Brickell
Dorling Kindersley, £35
ISBN 978-1409383949
Updated edition from the experts at the RHS.

FLOWERS IN THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL GARDENS
by Alain Le Toquin
Abrams, £30
ISBN 978-1419705588
Photos of the world's most striking flower gardens.

book offer details

Most featured books are available to readers at special rates. For details of book offers, arranged in association with EFC Bookshop, call 01872 562318 or go to www.gardensillustrated.com/shop

Offers apply to the reviewed books as indicated. Other titles listed here, and mentioned in the magazine, are available to order via www.gardensillustrated.com/shop. Alternatively, call 01872 562318 with your credit or debit card details, or send a cheque payable to GARDENS ILLUSTRATED to: Gardens Illustrated Bookshop, PO Box 200, Falmouth, Cornwall TR11 4WJ. Free delivery within UK. Worldwide delivery available with p&p calculated per order, please call 01872 562318 for a quote. Immediate Media Company is the data controller under the Data Protection Act 1998. All book orders are subject to 28 days' delivery and available while stocks last.

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Letters

Have your say – we'd like to hear your views, so please write to us at: GARDENS ILLUSTRATED, 9th Floor, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN, or email letters@gardensillustrated.com

Star letter

Real lawns rule

Please say no to Ann-Marie Powell's suggestion that artificial lawns may become more popular. Surely the benefits of a real lawn far outweigh the disadvantage of an 'imperfect' surface and time spent mowing and maintaining the grass? Why not create a wildlife meadow of grasses and flowers? The downside is that during the time taken for the flowers to set seed, the meadow is long and somewhat untidy. In today's small gardens this is sometimes interpreted as an eyesore.

Better by far is to turn a blind eye to the weeds in the lawn, which should be mown (not too closely) at fairly frequent intervals, say, once every 7-10 days from March to October. I have found that this encourages buttercups, daisies, clover, selfheal, fox and cubs and many others to grow and flower. The lawn looks reasonably presentable, our threatened wildlife is encouraged and there's not an artificial blade of grass to be seen. The latter may be manufactured from recycled materials but it does nothing for biodiversity and no true gardener is going to be excited by the smell and feel of a piece of artificial turf.

Loretta Rivett, by email

CAREERS

Eureka!

I have been a reader of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED for many years but I wanted to write and let you know that after what seems to be a lifetime of aimless wandering in the career landscape I have finally discovered my calling.

In February I'll be returning to school to study horticulture and landscape design. One would have thought this was a 'no-brainer' given my love of garden and plants but it never really occurred to me until reading the article about Nic Howard in the October issue.

I immediately told my wife "THAT... is what I want to be and do!" She is quite pleased and so am I. Where better for a lost gardener to find his calling than in the depths of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED? Thank you.

Steven De Booy, by email

TRENDS

Grown-up gardening

Three cheers for Cleve West! He has hit the nail on the head when he says that forcing style on to a garden alienates it from its surroundings and ruins the 'sense of place' [Design Trends 2013, January issue]. I for one think that fashion and passing trends are for teenagers and should play no part in gardening. GARDENS ILLUSTRATED is a grown-up magazine and should concentrate on serious gardening and beautiful gardens. Forget trends – leave them to the teenagers.

Christine Stephenson, by email

BOOKS

Beth's best

I have just sat and read the wonderful descriptions of Beth Chatto's favourite books [December issue]. What an inspired idea to ask for Beth's choices. I absolutely love her way of writing. Her garden is a must-see at any time of year. A wonderful place.

May I recommend two of Beth's own books that I treasure? *Garden Notebook*, which I have read and re-read so many times, and also *Dear Friend and Gardener*.

Linda Barr, Gloucestershire

WRITE TO US & WIN

The star letter wins a Haws 4.5 Litre Professional Long Reach Can, worth £60, made from galvanised metal, then powder-coated for strength and long life. For details of Haws' full range go to www.haws.co.uk

TALKING POINT

Rosemary Alexander counters the argument that British gardens are stuck in the past

Rosemary Alexander is an author, designer and the Principal of the English Gardening School.

Although some prominent UK designers are critical of the relevance of modern British gardens, comparing them unfavourably with continental gardens, I think the new mood in British gardening still surpasses what is going on in the continent. Our designers may still tend to concentrate on outdoor living by merging house and garden, first advocated by John Brookes' *Room Outside* ideas of the 60s. But our changing climate has altered the way we use hard landscaping, water and sculptural features, and our plant palette far exceeds that of other European countries.

We are far ahead in our understanding and encouragement of wildlife, in ecological issues such as reducing the carbon footprint by sourcing local materials, and of course 'Grow Your Own', although many developing European countries never stopped growing their own.

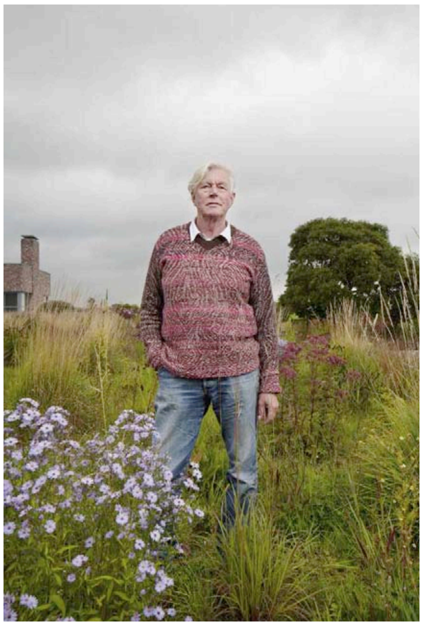
Continental designers have the advantage of a stronger quality of light, so can use brighter colours without them looking brash, but the many innovative ideas seen at Chelsea and copied internationally still keep the Brits ahead of the rest.

- What's your view? Write to us by post or email (details above).

We reserve the right to edit letters.

Reader offers

10% off Piet Oudolf's 'must-have' plant selection


FRANK HANSWIJK

Internationally renowned plantsman Piet Oudolf has chosen 100 of his favourite plants for our feature on pages 33-45. His plantings are characterised by drifts of herbaceous perennials and grasses in inspiring combinations and his selection reveals some more unusual plants along with more familiar garden additions, all of which offer either, or both, attractive flowers or interesting structure.

If you've been tempted by the plants suggested by Piet, the Beth Chatto Nursery, which stocks a selection of his chosen plants, is offering readers a 10% discount on orders made from its nursery (across its entire plant range).

How to order

Go to www.bethchatto.co.uk and select your plants from the nursery plant list. When prompted use the code 'gardillpiet' to gain your discount. You can also place your order over the telephone. Call 01206 822007 and quote 'Gardens Illustrated'.

There is a minimum order of £20. P&P is charged at £10 (£20 Highlands & Islands of Scotland/Northern & Southern Ireland/Channel Isles/Isle of Wight/Isle of Man).

Offer ends 28 February 2013. Only available to readers in the UK and Ireland.

Please note the Beth Chatto Nursery does not stock all of Piet's selected plants. The *RHS Plant Finder* book or http://apps.rhs.org.uk/rhsplantfinder/index.asp lists suppliers of specific plants.

WIN this Alitags professional copper labeling kit

Give your plants smart, clear labels with this professional labeling kit from Alitags. This kit appeared in our Christmas Gift Guide back in December – we're now offering it as a competition prize.

THE KIT CONTAINS

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- Wooden holding box for punches – £34.
- Selection of 30 copper labels in different sizes and styles – approx. £120 in total.

Worth in total £376*. (Hammer required.)

How to enter

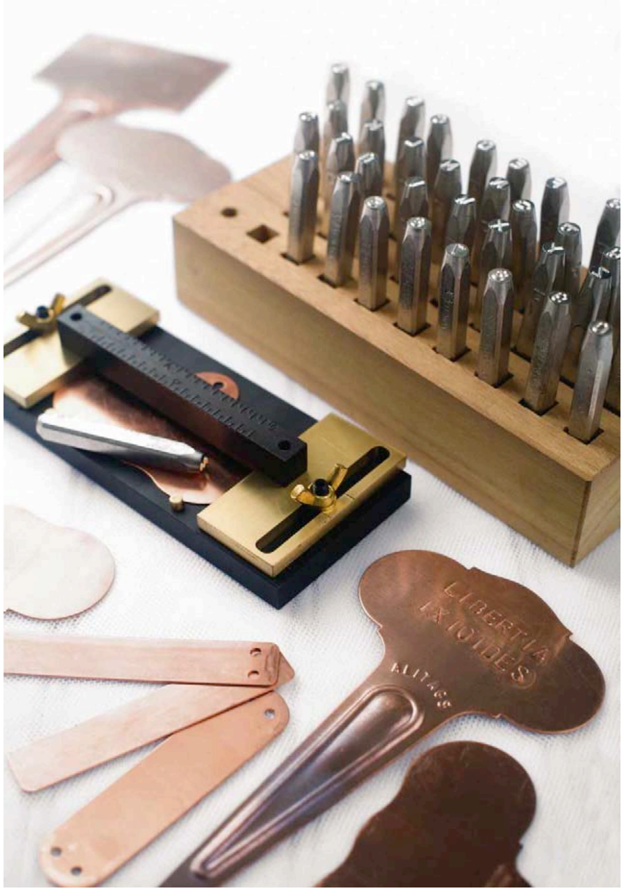
For your chance to win please answer the following question:

What is the botanical genus for snowdrops?

- Enter by post: send a postcard with your answer, along with your name, address, postcode and contact details to:
  Gardens Illustrated 194/Alitags, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA.
- Enter online at www.gardenillustrated.com

Closing date 28 February 2013

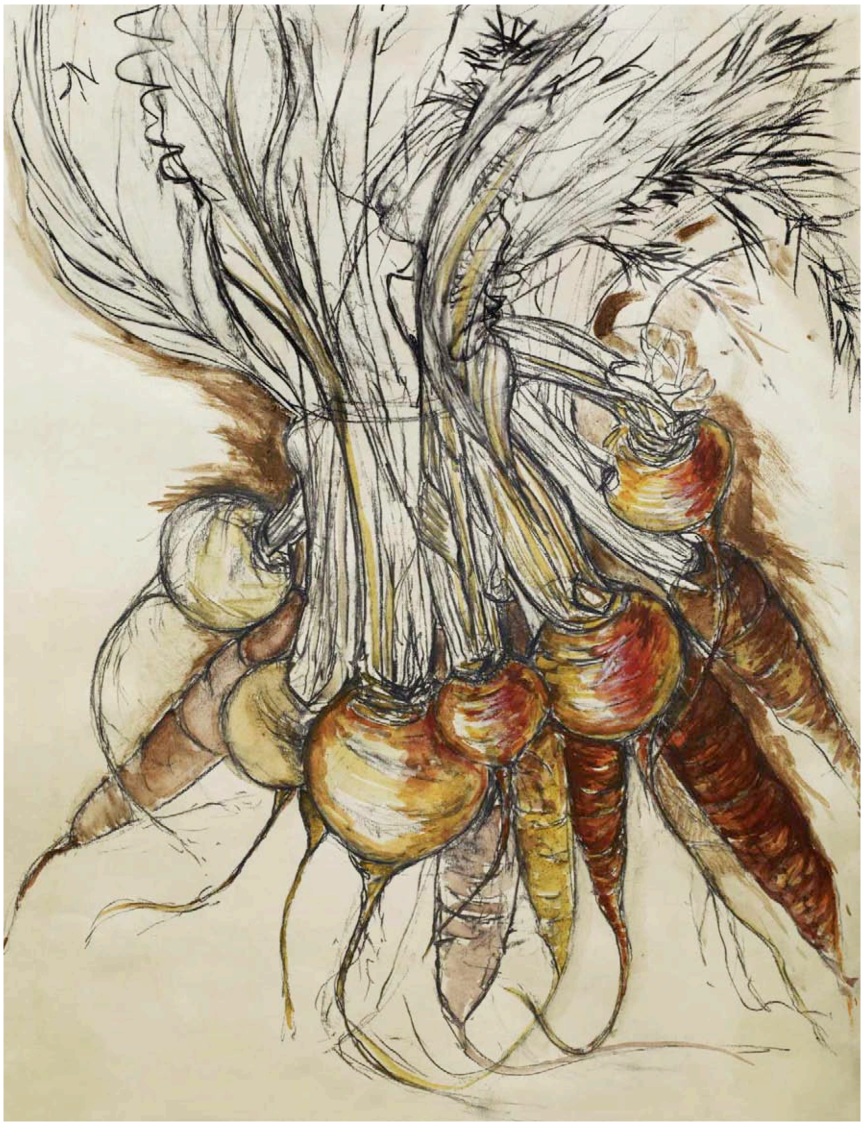
Full details of Alitags range can be found at www.alitags.com



SEAN MALYON

* The kit featured in our photoshoot so has been opened but otherwise is in pristine condition. See terms and conditions on opposite page.

Exclusive Natasha Clutterbuck print



ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Artist Natasha Clutterbuck (see our feature on page 60) has created one of her gorgeous charcoal drawn vegetable images and made it available exclusively to GARDENS ILLUSTRATED readers as a print. 'Golden Beetroot and Purple Carrot' is printed on high-quality, acid free, photo rag art paper, A2 in size (594mm x 420mm). Price £120 including postage and packaging.

To order your print please contact
Natasha on 01275 331528 or email
n.clutterbuck77@btinternet.com

TERMS AND CONDITIONS
1 The Promoter is Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited. 2 The promotion is open to UK residents (including the Channel Islands) aged 18 years or older, except the Promoter's employees or contractors and anyone connected with the promotion and their direct family members. 3 The closing date for entries is 11.59pm on 28 February 2013. 4 To enter send details of your name, address and contact details to Gardens Illustrated 194/Alitags, PO Box 501, Leicester LI94 0AA. Or enter online at www.gardensillustrated.com 5 Only one entry will be permitted per person, regardless of method of entry. Bulk entries made by third parties will not be permitted. 6 The winning entrants will be the first names drawn at random from all the entries after the closing date. 7 The Promoter's decision as to the winners is final and no correspondence relating to the promotion will be entered into. 8 The winners will be notified within 30 days of the close of the promotion by post/telephone/email. 9 There is no cash alternative and the prize will not be transferable. Prizes must be taken as stated and cannot be deferred. The Promoter reserves the right to substitute the prize with one of the same or greater value. 10 Full terms and conditions apply and can be found at ww.gardensillustrated.com.

Yellow book offer

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THE YELLOW BOOK 2013
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Each year *The Yellow Book* details the opening dates of all the gardens opening on behalf of The National Gardens Scheme (NGS). These gardens, many of which are private and not usually open to the public, help raise funds for charities such as MacMillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie Cancer Care, Help the Hospices and Carers Trust. Since its founding in 1927 The National Gardens Scheme has donated an amazing £43 million to nursing caring and gardening charities. We are delighted once again to be offering *The Yellow Book 2013* at a special reader discount of £7 (rrp £9.99) including p&p within the UK. To order a copy go to www.ngs.org.uk and use the code 'giyb13'. **Offer valid until** end of July 2013.

Spectacular Snowdrops...

Nothing represents the beauty of winter quite like a breathtaking snowdrop display, and here are some of the finest Britain has to offer. Make the trip and indulge.

1. CHIPPENHAM PARK

Chippenham Park lies close to the border of Suffolk and Cambridgeshire just north of Newmarket.
The display of naturalised snowdrops is probably the finest in East Anglia.
The gardens will open to the public for weekends in February. Delicious home-made soups, bbq and other refreshments served all day from our licensed tea-rooms.

ADDRESS **Chippenham Park, Ely, Cambridgeshire w**
WEBSITE **www.chippenhamparkgardens.info** TEL **01638 721 416**

2. RODE HALL & GARDENS

Rode Hall Gardens has one of the most spectacular displays of snowdrops in the North with over 50 different types set in a Humphry Repton landscape. The mile-long Snowdrop Walk is a perfect stroll out in the fresh air for the whole family, amid swathes of cascading white flowers that truly are a sight to behold. 2 February - 10 March, 12 - 4pm (except Mondays).

ADDRESS **Church Lane, Scholar Green, Cheshire ST7 3QP**
WEBSITE **www.rodehall.co.uk** TEL **01270 873237**

3. WATERPERRY GARDENS

For stunning snowdrops this February visit Waterperry Gardens. Discover over 30 different varieties in the ornamental gardens and Riverside Walk with free snowdrop tours on 16, 17, 23 and 24 February (garden entrance fee applies). Inspirational gardens and plants, expert advice, sumptuous food and great ideas for the home and garden.

ADDRESS **Waterperry, Near Wheatley, Oxfordshire OX33 1JZ**
WEBSITE **www.waterperrygardens.co.uk** TEL **01844 339254**

4. WELFORD PARK

A privately owned Queen Anne home in the family since 1618. The seven acre beech wood is one of the largest carpets of snowdrops in the British Isles. The banks of the River Lambourn and the gardens have many more species of galanthus, together with aconites and winter flowering shrubs. The Old Laundry tea room serves homemade lunches and cream teas. Open in February, Wednesday to Sunday – 11am to 4pm.

ADDRESS **Welford, Newbury, Berkshire RG20 8HU**
WEBSITE **www.welfordpark.co.uk** TEL **01488 608691**

5. BENINGTON LORDSHIP GARDENS

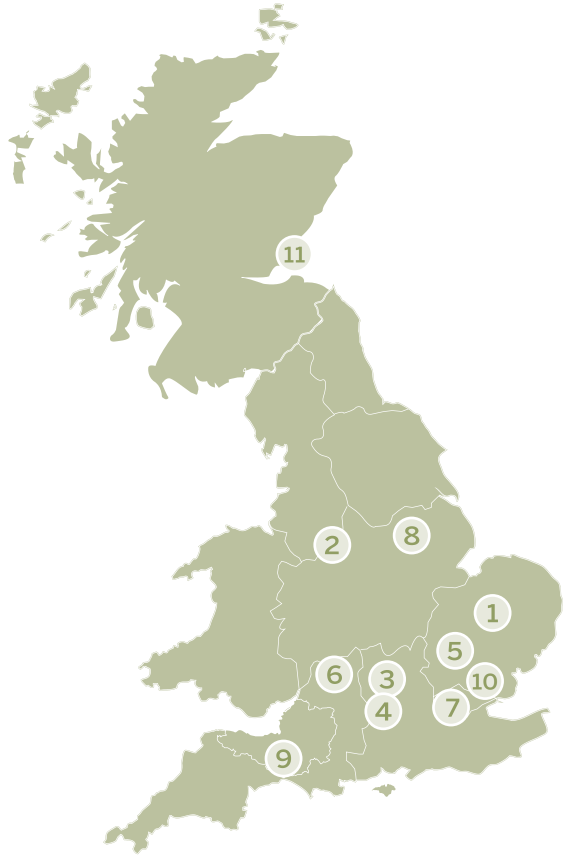
This seven-acre garden sits on an historic, fortified site dating back to Norman times and is famous for its stunning display of snowdrops, which have naturalised in the moat and surrounding areas. With the snowdrop collection now extending to 140 varieties, the garden is a must-see for any keen galanthophile. Open daily 2-24 February, 12-4pm & tearoom.

ADDRESS **Walkern Road, Benington, Stevenage SG2 7BS**
WEBSITE **www.beningtonlordship.co.uk** TEL **01438 869668**

6. COLESBOURNE PARK

Started by plant collector Henry John Elwes FRS the collection has been greatly enhanced in recent years. 10 acres, 250 varieties of snowdrop, lakeside walk, teas and plant sales. Dogs welcome. £7.00.
Every Saturday and Sunday in February plus 2 and 3 March. Halfway Cheltenham/Cirencester A435.

ADDRESS **Colesbourne, Gloucestershire GL53 9NP**
WEBSITE **www.snowdrop.org.uk** TEL **01242 870264**



7. CHELSEA PHYSIC GARDEN

Snowdrop Days Saturday 2 to Sunday 10 February, daily 10am – 4pm. Celebrate the coming of spring at London's oldest botanic garden. Galanthomania with drifts of 10,000 newly planted snowdrops plus trail, theatre, guided tours and workshops. Includes rare snowdrops for sale from Monksilver Nursery, book & gift shop and renowned Café.

ADDRESS **66 Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea, London SW3 4HS**
WEB **www.chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk** TEL **020 7352 5646**

8. HODSOCK PRIORY GARDENS

A historic country house set in 800 acres of countryside on the border of Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire. Visit during the snowdrop period (2 Febuary – 3 March) and enjoy exploring 12 acres of woodland boasting a plethora of snowdrop varieties and five acres of formal gardens awash with winter blooms.

ADDRESS **Blyth, Nr Worksop, Nottinghamshire S81 0TY**
WEBSITE **www.hodsockpriory.com www.snowdrops.co.uk**
TEL **01909 591 204**

9. FORDE ABBEY

Forde Abbey is renowned for its bulbs, especially during the February Snowdrop Weekends and March Crocus Week, when they carpet the gardens. Wordsworth's venturous harbingers of spring always delight our visitors at a time of year when the structural features of the gardens also stand out: the topiary, statuary, and ponds.

ADDRESS **Chard, Dorset TA20 4LU**
WEBSITE **www.fordeabbey.co.uk** TEL **01460 221290**

10. MARKS HALL GARDENS AND ARBORETUM

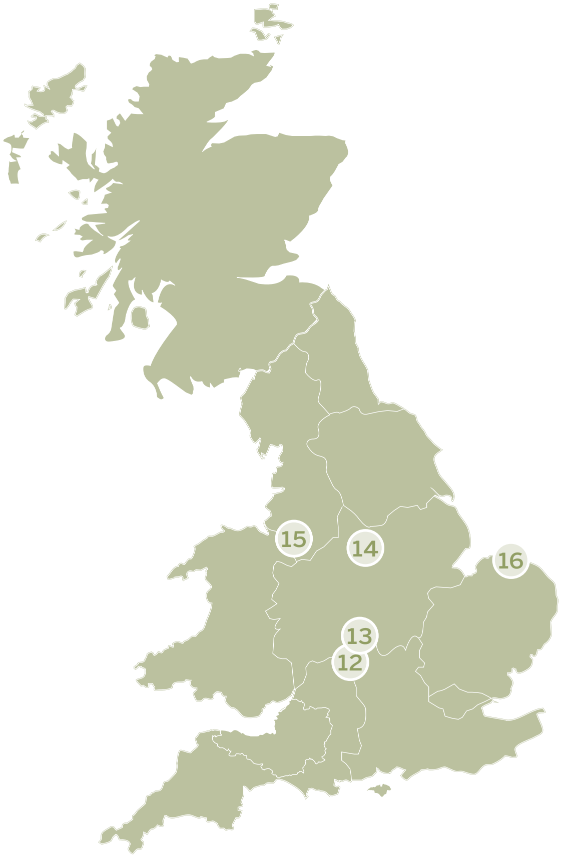
Providing a great day out for the whole family. Wonderful woodland walks, a delightful children-friendly walled garden, lovely lakes and trees with amazing plants from around the world providing stunning year-round colour. The five individual gardens within 17th-century walls combine the best of contemporary and traditional. The double long border is the longest in East Anglia.

ADDRESS **Marks Hall, Coggeshall CO6 1TG**
WEBSITE **www.markshall.org.uk** TEL **01376 563796**

11. CAMBO GARDENS

The 70 acres of woodland walks on Cambo Estate provide a stunning backdrop to the carpets of snowdrops, snowflakes and aconites that smother the banks of the burn as it flows to the sea.
Enjoy also a National Collection and winter garden, a guided walk each week day (free with entry) or feed the piglets.
Mail order bulbs.
Open daily 10am to 4.30pm. Adults £5, children free.

ADDRESS **Kingsbarns, St Andrews KY16 8QD**
WEBSITE **www.camboestate.com** TEL **01333 450054**



12. BATSFORD ARBORETUM

Revive yourself with a magical winter walk through snowdrops, aconites and a whole host of early spring flowers. Enjoy breathtaking views at every turn, fabulous freshly baked food in the Garden Terrace Café and get a head start in the garden with a visit to our Plant Centre and Garden Shop. Batsford Arboretum – naturally beautiful all year round.

ADDRESS **Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire GL56 9AB**
WEBSITE **www.batsarb.co.uk** TEL **01386 701441**

13. RAGLEY GARDENS

Ragley Hall stately home opens its garden gates for exclusive garden walks throughout the year, starting at the end of January. Delight in the large swathes of *Galanthus nivalis* that frame the fabulous Winter Garden, which has over 60 varieties of snowdrops. Head gardener, Ross Barbour, will also be hosting a garden talk at 1pm. 31 January and 7, 14 & 28 February 2013 between 11am and 3pm.

ADDRESS **Ragley Hall, Alcester, Warwickshire B49 5NJ**
WEBSITE **www.ragleyhall.com** TEL **01789 762090**

14. HOPTON HALL

The Snowdrop Gardens at Hopton Hall consist of five acres of woodland covered with snowdrops in a completely natural setting. Come and see the restoration work so far in this historic Derbyshire garden. It is open every day from Friday 1 February to Sunday 3 March 2013 from 10.30am to 4pm, £4 per person (children under 16 free).

ADDRESS **Hopton, Derbyshire DE4 4DF**
WEBSITE **www.hoptonhall.co.uk** TEL **01629540923**

15. ABBEYWOOD GARDEN AND CAFE

For the first time a chance to see the collection of snowdrops in Jane's Garden and the beginning of our snowdrop story at Abbeywood. See website or telephone for details.

ADDRESS **Delamere, Cheshire CW8 2HS**
WEBSITE **www.abbeywoodgardenscheshire.co.uk**
TEL **01606 301374**

16. WALSINGHAM ABBEY GROUNDS

Visit Walsingham Abbey for spectacular carpets of *Galanthus nivalis* and aconites naturalised through almost 20 acres of woodland, surrounding the ruins of the medieval priory and place of pilgrimage. The Abbey Grounds are open daily from the start of the snowdrop season in early February.

ADDRESS **Little Walsingham, Norfolk NR22 6BP**
WEBSITE **www.walsinghamabbey.com** TEL **01328 820259**

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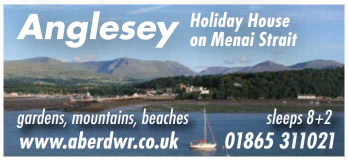
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Heleborus Argutifollus	£5.95 per 3 pots	£17.50 per 9 pots	
Heleborus Orientallis	£5.95 per 3 pots	£17.50 per 9 pots	
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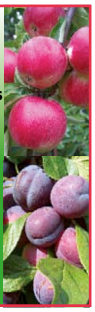

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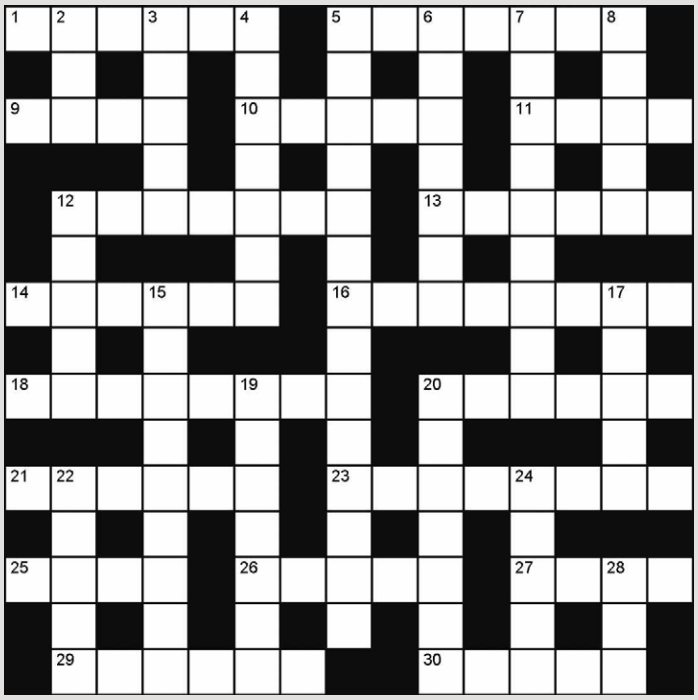

ACROSS

1 Early-flowering bulb – *tommasinianus* is its most common form – occurs all over the place! (6)
5 Fergus, Great Dixter's head gardener and our new Nurseryman (7)
9/27 A *Salvia* x *sylvestris* named after (the start of a letter to?) Piet Oudolf's wife (4,4)
10 Side dish describing the days of one's carefree youth? (5)
11 Lily might be after this ... one alcoholic drink! (4)
12 Catchfly plant of *Silene* or *Lychnis* genus – main cop out! (7)
13 Seakale, __ *cordifolia*, one of Piet Oudolf's must-have plants (6)
14 Cover for outdoor plants – having Scottish lake in middle! (6)
16 Genus of daisy-like flowers – he confused *Linum* with endive initially (8)
18 Draws soil around eg celery (6,2)
20 Female flower parts sadly split around top of iris (6)
21 See 30ac.
23 Common name for a *Mesembryanthemum*'s awfully plain, etc (3,5)
25 Cauliflower head and coagulated milk! (4)
26 Studies, it's said, marsh plants (5)
27 See 9ac.
29 It lasts only one blooming year! (6)
30/21 *Viola odorata* is our native one (5,6)

DOWN

2 Deeply regret this bitter-scented shrub (3)
3 *Caraway* genus in Madagascar umbellifers (5)
4 Stalkless ... part of roses, silenes (7)
5 Margaret Owen and Matt Bishop are such snowdrop enthusiasts! (14)
6 Fundamental sort of rootlet, it's said (7)
7 *Oleaster* genus Angela and Sue mixed up (9)
8 As opposed to a finger, it's useful for eg pinching out! (5)
12 Poisonous marsh plant ... in botanical landscape (5)
15 Seed leaf's cold yet no variety (9)
17 As put before Jack to produce a (non-flowering) flag (5)
19 A genus of grasses – *Artemisia* perhaps (I'm not included) (7)
20 Flattens and dries flowers (7)
22 Plant of Aster family – found in Spain, Ulan Bator! (5)
24 Abandon ... endless main food-making organs of plants (5)
28 Fast stream – from tops of Jekyll's elegant terraces (3)

SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH

JANUARY'S SOLUTIONS

ACROSS: 1 Graham **5** Perlite **9** SSSI **10** Air **11** Peuce **12** Tresco **13** Nitrogen **15** Beer trap **17** Drift **18** Bugle **19** Cucumber **21** Trilobum **23** Atropa **25** Winter **27** Run **29** Scenery **30** Sinks.
DOWN: 2 Reserve **3** Heims **4** Meadow rue **5** Parsnip **6** Repot **7** IOU **8** Element **14** Opium **16** Regal **17** Dictamnus **18** Berries **19** Comfrey **20** Experts **22/28** Burle Marx **24** Roman **26** Tie.

DECEMBER'S BUMPER CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

ACROSS: 8 Habitat **10** Mould **12** Tea rose **14** *Elaeagnus* **15** Suber **16** Bucks **17/9** *Malus transitoria* **19** Allee **20** Liquorice **22** Spotted **23** Tudor **24** Exposed **27** Radar **28** Noel **29** Alan **31** Dig in **33** Garland **35** Cajun **37** *Phlomis* **38** *Phillyrea* **40** Vegan **41** Prong **43** Iroko **44** Blown **45** Archangel **47** Oregano **48** Stops **49** Nut case.
DOWN: 1 Phleum **2** Abba **3** Standard 4 Munstead **5** Star **6** Bamboo **7** Nessie **10** Mistletoe **11** Dibbler **13** Orchids **18** Lloyd **22** Sprig **25** Paddle plant **26** Dunes **28** Nadir **30** Long grass **32** Gumbo **34** Rhizome **35** Chamois **36** JC Van Tol **37** Pine cone **38** Poison **39** Loofah **42/21** Golden Queen **44** Blom **46** Gean.

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Gertrude Jekyll

DECEMBER 2012
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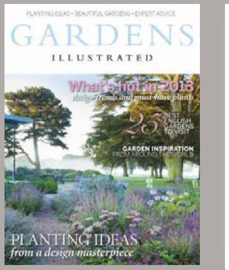

JANUARY 2013
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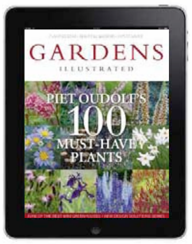

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ANDREW MONTGOMERY

The rule of one

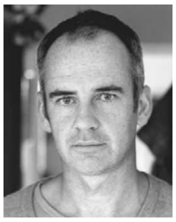
The expedition for hellebores is among the year's great pleasures – but how do you buy just one?

WORDS **FRANK RONAN** ILLUSTRATION **ANGELA HARDING**

We are watching the hellebores. Some years they will have begun to flower in January, but if it is cold enough they might hold fire until the spring and rush into bloom at the same time as everything else. Usually it is February when something begins to happen. We are watchful, not only for the great pleasure of hellebores, but because when ours come into bud the Ashwood hellebores will be in full swing and it is the signal for an annual expedition.

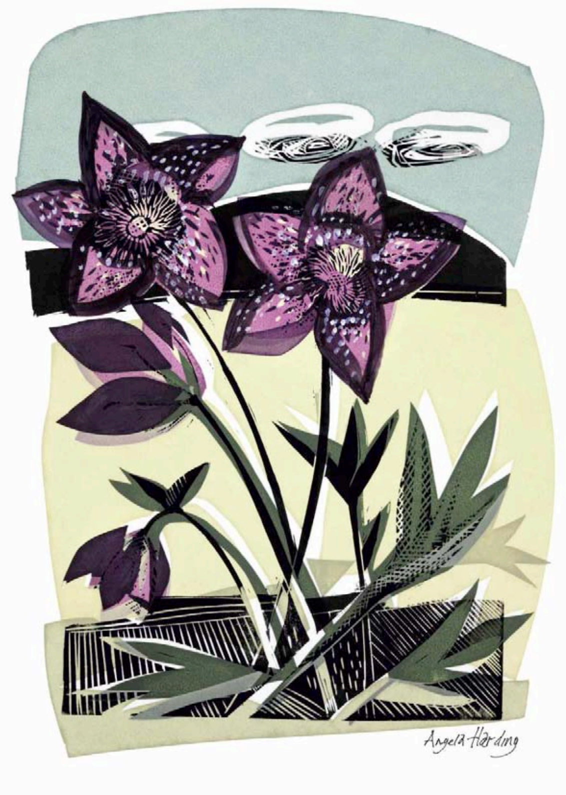
In theory we allow ourselves one new hellebore each. In practice Miles will inevitably choose the most expensive one in the nursery (some people have an instinct for these things), which then justifies me getting both of the two I wasn't able to choose between because they amount to the same price, which in turn leads Miles to conclude that if I am allowed two, then so is he. I think we both know that the rule of one is only there because some kind of restraint is necessary. If you didn't have to concentrate on which was your absolute heart's desire you'd be coming home with a bootload and an overdraft.

The trouble is that when you have a few varieties in the garden, you want more of the same for different places, and you also want some kinds that you have had your eye on and resisted, and that is before you've seen the novelties that this year will offer. There is a lot of lip-biting and wincing and foot-hopping and after you have finally decided that you really do want a single white with maroon picotee and dark centres, there is a certain amount of running to and fro comparing examples from various parts of the nursery.



Frank Ronan is a novelist who lives and gardens in Worcestershire

This year the shortlist is anything but short. I want more neons, which are a yellow veined with red, but I also need to replace an x *nigercors*, which is short-lived but spectacular while it lasts, and I long for more *thibetanus* if only to see whether I can make it happier in other places. There can never be enough of the yellow with golden nectary kind and, even though I went a bit mad on them last year on the sheep and lamb principle, you never know that I might see one holding itself in a particularly pleasing way and sidle up to it conspiratorially.



"There is a lot of lip-biting and wincing and foot-hopping"

Because the thing about buying hellebores is that you have to do it when they are in flower and you have to do it in person. The way the plant stands is of primary importance. Beautiful though the markings might be, it is only a tiny percentage that will be set floating in bowls. The majority will have to earn their keep in the garden, where posture is everything. Two plants that are identical in every other regard can be radically different in deportment. More than that, one with unremarkable flowers might easily outshine a rarity if it has the better attitude.

It is not always easy to tell what will make a good plant. I know people who make rules about how rounded the petals are, but that is putting bureaucracy before merit. Flowers should be held out well, but still with some modesty. Attempts to breed hellebores that turn their faces up to you have mostly succeeding in awkwardness, if not vulgarity. There is one here, a dingy pink that was bought off a market stall for a pound, which is absolutely exquisite in its bearing. The angle of the flowers invites rather than offers. I love it most.

Not that the spectacular should be sniffed at. There is a double spotted white, chosen by Miles about ten years ago which is the lynchpin of its bed for the several months it is in profuse, extravagant flower. I had thought of getting 20 more of it to fill the entire bed under the sitting room window, if only I could think of a way round the rule of one. □

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